THE

LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 19 October, 1937 Number 10

DUTT

Norwich, Bournemouth and After

POLLITT

What Next in Britain?

LANGDON-DAVIES

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

Bournemouth's Responsibility—Where Norwich Failed—Urgency Not Seen —Workers' Conditions Worsened—What Answer From Norwich?— Labour Campaign Problems — Policy's Decisive Rôle — Twelve Months Since Edinburgh—Unity and Disunity—Local Labour Parties' Claims — Arms Vote Controversy — By-Elections Barometer — Bournemouth's Cardinal Task — What Political Perspective?—Mr. Attlee's Perspective— Mr. Cole's Perspective—Problems To Be Faced —Mr. Bevin's Perspective—The Fight Against the National Government — Arms and Policy — The Wider Fight

THE Labour Party Conference at Bournemouth is meeting in a situation whose urgency and menace leaves even the fateful conditions of the Edinburgh Conference a year ago no more than a prelude. In these twelve months the international situation has worsened. The position of the workers in this country has worsened. The Labour Movement has not yet achieved any advance against the National Government. The inner crisis of the Labour Party following on Edinburgh has developed to new forms. The Edinburgh decisions, after leading to extreme weakness and divisions of policy, have given place to new interpretations which have in fact further weakened the fight against the National Government. The National Government is able to go forward unchecked with its policies of reaction at home and abroad, which mean eventually the certainty of world war, and pours scorn on the impotence and disorganisation of the opposition forces in Britain. We are faced in consequence with extremely serious questions, if we are to find the way forward to transform this position in the near future. Yet it is essential that we find the way, not only in the interests of the movement in Britain, but in the interests of the world situation, in view of the decisive rôle of Britain as a world power. We hold here a responsibility before history and before the peoples of the world in which failure will not be forgiven.

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THE proceedings of the Norwich Trades Union Congress showed that the real urgency and responsibility of our rôle here in Britain is not yet realised. If it were, there would be a very different atmosphere and response from all sections of the leadership. What is seen is the menace of the international situation, the advance of fascist aggression and war. But this is seen as something happening outside, disturbing the peaceful progress of this happy island ; and therefore the only conclusion drawn is in practice to creep closer to the National Government and its rearmament programme as the supposed means of defence against the foreign dangers. Despite the formal criticism of the past foreign policy of the National Government (never of its present rôle), there is not the slightest sign of awareness that a foremost, if not the main danger factor of the international situation is the existence and policy of the British National Government, with its balancing rôle continually tipping the scales on the side of fascism, making possible the advance of fascist aggression and hampering the democratic and peace front from within. *It is not seen that for us the heart of the worsening international situation is the inner political situation in Britain ; here is the real danger, here is our failure, here is the weak point in the world democratic and peace front, here is our political task if we are concerned about the international situation.* There is not the slightest sign of consciousness of our responsibility, of the responsibility of our Labour Movement and of the people of this country for permitting the National Government to turn the world situation to the advantage of fascism ; that we are regarded as the weak sector of the front by the peoples of the other democratic countries, by the peoples of France, of Spain, of Czechoslovakia or of the Soviet Union ; just as our Labour Movement is responsible for preventing international working-class unity.

THE Chairman's Address at the Norwich Trades Union Congress proclaimed the international situation to be " very black." He delivered a diatribe against the fascist powers, Germany, Italy and Japan. So far, so good. But to balance this, he delivered also an attack against the one Socialist Power which is leading the fight for peace and for the peoples of the world against fascist aggression ; and he based this attack precisely upon its successful measures and vigilance to counter the attempted incursion and wrecking of fascist agents in preparation for war. While thus attacking " impartially " both the fascist war front

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and the peace front, he had no attack to make against the National Government in Britain for its rôle in the present international situation ; he gave no sign of self-criticism of the rôle and responsibility of the Labour Movement in this country. It is this complete complacency, this unawareness, this torpor of self-satisfaction alongside actual failure to lead the fight, which, even more than the decisions reached, is the most menacing warning-signal of Norwich.

THIS is not only a question of foreign policy. There can be no separation of home policy and foreign policy, which at bottom are part of the same fight. It is the failure of the home fight against the employers and the National Government which underlies the failure in foreign policy. What is the position ? In France and the United States there have been gigantic movements of advance of the workers on the basis of unity ; millions have been organised ; the forty-hour week, holidays with pay, wage increases and other big concessions have been won. To-day the workers' leaders of these countries are complaining that their gains are being endangered by the failure to realise a parallel advance in Britain. In Britain, while the French Confederation of Labour advanced in one year from one million to five million, we are proud to record an advance of one-third of a million to pass the four million mark ; and even this is still below the level of before the General Strike. The recent official enquiry (results published in the *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, March to July, 1937) has revealed that the workers in this country are working longer hours than thirteen years ago : 46 hours as the average actually worked in 1924, and 47.8 hours in 1935 ; and in the two years since then overtime has heavily increased. In respect of earnings, despite these longer hours, intense labour and a heavy increase in output per worker, the enquiry showed an average of 48s. 3d. per worker in 1924 and 48s. 11d. in 1935. The wage concessions that have been recently won have been more than wiped out by the rising cost of living. David Grenfell, M.P., of the National Council of Labour, declared in the House of Commons on July 28, that in the four years since 1933 wages have risen by 2½ per cent., but the cost of living has risen by 12½ per cent. And this rise in the cost of living is now mounting still more steeply as the effects of the concealed taxation of the arms programme are making themselves felt, with no corresponding rise in wages.

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DID the Trades Union Congress at Norwich make any attempt to tackle this situation and give leadership? *It is incredible to relate, but the whole problem of the struggle of the workers in the industrial field in this worsening situation was completely ignored at the Trades Union Congress; not a single leading debate was devoted to it.* And the official Labour organ could triumphantly come out with its headline comment at the end of the Congress: "A Great Congress: Unity Collapses" (September 11). At the beginning of the year, with the original advance of the Unity Campaign, there was every sign of an awakening advance of the workers towards a powerful strike movement to win similar gains as in other countries. This rising strike movement, it is necessary to state frankly, was smashed on the head from above. The turning point was the London Bus Strike, when one section of workers of the same union was compelled, against the repeated demands of their representatives to the Executive, to carry out the work which defeated another section; the strike was broken on the basis of over-riding the democratic machinery of representation in the union; while the men's leaders, whose record and loyalty to trade unionism could not be exceeded in the finest pages of trade union history in Britain, and who were democratically elected with the unanimous confidence of the men they led, were expelled from the union. Since then the worsening of the workers' conditions has gone steeply forward. How can we expect on this basis to build up the strength of the organised working-class movement, to win the confidence of the unorganised workers in the Labour Movement, or to win a Labour majority?

WHAT of the political field? On the eve of Bournemouth we have just had the Labour Campaign Week to secure a hundred thousand new members. It is to be hoped that this campaign will have secured a full success; for the building up of the strength of the Labour Party is the indispensable basis for further advance. We believe that the attitude of those left elements and supporters of unity who, admittedly under provocation of the heresy-hunt, withdrew participation, was a serious political error injuring the cause of unity. Supporters of unity desire to help to build up a strong, representative and democratic Labour Party; we freely recognise that the aim of unity and of overcoming the bans which at present prevent the workers fighting side by side can

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only be realised by winning the conviction of the majority of the membership, and this will only be achieved by the experience of the common struggle convincing the majority of the seriousness and sincerity of the supporters of unity. The present situation absolutely requires, not new divisions and secessions (those imposed by the Executive are already bad enough), but the most unflinching determination, undeterred by provocations or obstacles, to build up the united working-class army. This will be all the more important in the situation after Bournemouth, in view of tendencies that exist on the left to yield to counsels of despair and meet disunity on the right by disunity on the left. But at the same time, while recognising the fullest importance of the Campaign Week, it is also necessary to recognise that the future of the Labour Party will never be solved by the best organised revival campaign alone, so long as the political problem at the root of present difficulties is left untouched. *The task of building the Labour Party, of winning the majority of the working-class to the Labour Party, is a political task, not a question of one-by-one conversion to abstract socialism, but a task of leading the masses in movement on present burning issues against big capital and its Government.*

IS the Labour Party performing this task to-day? Does the Labour Party to-day provide the plain clear-cut popular policy—not general remote programmes of future legislation, but the answers to the questions that are troubling the minds of people at the present day—together with the fighting leadership and active campaigns on the basis of that policy, capable of arousing the confidence and enthusiasm of the masses and winning the majority of the people against the National Government? To ask that question is unfortunately to answer it. Twelve months ago the Edinburgh Conference provided a spectacle of confusion of policy and leadership which aroused the delight of our enemies and the dismay of supporters of all sections. How far have we advanced since then? What prospect is there that Bournemouth will be an improvement on Edinburgh?

THE Edinburgh Conference took a series of decisions on leading current issues, on Spain, on arms, on unity. How have these decisions worn in these twelve months? The decision on Spain was reversed before the Conference was over. That reversal was never

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carried out by the Executive. At the London International Conference in March the demand of the Spanish socialists and trade unionists for the ending of the support of non-intervention—which was fully in accordance with the second Edinburgh decision—was shamefully overridden. Finally, in June, support of non-intervention was officially abandoned, and the policy of the opposition formally adopted, which, had it been adopted ten months earlier, could have saved the situation. By the Norwich Congress the attempt was being made to deny the whole original propaganda in support of neutrality: "our policy has been to secure for the constitutionally appointed Government of Spain the rights to which it is entitled in virtue of international law: the principle of neutrality was never accepted by us" (General Council Report to the Norwich Congress: on this cool assumption of short memories it is sufficient to note that the Furnishing Trades amendment at the Plymouth Congress for opposition to the neutrality policy and for the right of the Spanish Government to get arms was officially opposed and voted down by 3,029,000 to 51,000—an even bigger majority than this year's vote on arms, and reversed within a year). Incidentally, Bevin, at Norwich, still tried to present non-intervention as "the policy of Premier Blum," although the facts have long been established that the Blum Cabinet had officially decided to send arms to Spain, that they were faced with the ultimatum of the British Government which invented the policy of non-intervention, that even then Blum was for standing out against the British non-intervention policy, but was only defeated by the threat of the Radical Ministers to resign. Leave aside for a moment the detail issues of the controversy. Consider only this twelve months record on Spain, one of the burning questions of the day and fateful for the whole future of international peace and the defence of democracy, as a record of leadership. Is there here a trace of leadership capable of inspiring the supporters of peace and democracy or winning a majority of the people against the National Government?

ON unity, the decision reached has increased the practical difficulties of every local labour party, where the only wish of the local workers is to get on with the job together without distinction of labels, and who find themselves hampered and obstructed at every turn by complicated bans from headquarters. It has led to a heresy hunt, wider in scale than any preceding, and to the exclusion of the Socialist

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League. By this exclusion, and by the restriction on the expression and participation of the local labour parties in the effective determination of policy, the Labour Party is finally left without any organ of political expression within its ranks alongside the powerful trade unions. This is a completely new and dangerous situation in the Labour Party without parallel since its inception. The needs of the movement more and more powerfully point to the affiliation of the Communist Party as the necessary step forward in this situation, to strengthen the inner life and fight of the Labour Party and help to draw together all sections on the basis of a common class policy. Meanwhile, disunity leads to widening dangers and cracks. The forty-three resolutions on unity from affiliated organisations, exceeding any other subject in importance in the minds of the membership, if judged by the contrast with twenty-six resolutions on the question of war and peace (eighteen for voting against armaments) are ruled out by the Executive in a decision that raises a protest even from the liberal *Manchester Guardian*, August 23, 1937:

> For a party that boasts of its democratic constitution, the Labour Party is a highly successful practitioner of the art of stifling discussion. . . . The Executive has decided that the Conference shall not be allowed to discuss the subject obviously much in its mind. . . . It seems rather high-handed action when the minority to be crushed is something like a quarter of the Conference, and when the issue is one that has been most discussed inside the Party in the last twelve months.

TO meet the dissatisfaction of the local labour parties the Executive has proposed that they shall be allowed to elect their own representatives, raised to the number of seven, on the Executive. This would be an important step forward to greater democracy in the Labour Party. But it is already reported that the right wing leadership in the trade unions has refused to allow this and aims to compel the Executive to withdraw. Along with this comes the ultimatum of Lawther at Norwich, warning the parliamentary representatives, many of whom had begun to show a closer sympathy on a number of issues, such as Spain and arms, with the feelings of the membership, that the trade union section of the leadership (*i.e.*, in practice, the small right wing group within the trade union leadership) shall alone dictate policy; and the answer of Morrison, correctly repudiating any sectional claims to determination of the common policy. It is unnecessary to stress the dangers inherent in this situation, no less than in the separatist and anti-union

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tendencies developing among some of the local labour parties. These dangers can only be overcome by a clear and consistent policy of working-class unity ; and delay of this is imperilling the whole basis and future of the Labour Party.

ON re-armament, it is notorious that the Edinburgh resolution was couched in such evasive terms that, although the real intention of the right wing was well-known and has since been more openly pressed forward, it was possible for conflicting interpretations to be presented by different members of the Executive at Edinburgh, and for the Conference to vote on the resolution without agreeing what it meant. What has been the result in practice of this system of public evasion of the main political issue before the country ? When it came to the decisive vote in July, the Executive of the Parliamentary Labour Party reached one decision ; the Parliamentary Labour Party reversed it by an almost equally divided vote of 45 to 39, with half the members abstaining. It is a very significant and even hopeful sign that there is a rising body of feeling within the Parliamentary Labour Party, and in important sections of the leadership, to the disastrous right wing policy which moves to practical collaboration with the National Government. But for the immediate effect of the present position, how is it possible for such a spectacle, not only of divided leadership, but of public evasion ending in abstention (*i.e.*, renunciation of any political rôle on the main issue before the country) to inspire any confidence in the electorate that here is any alternative leadership to the National Government ?

THE inevitable result of this denial of leadership is written in the gloomy record of the by-elections. In place of the normal advance of the opposition vote, we see a net fall of the Labour vote below the level of the general election, and apathy of half the electorate. In the Springburn by-election, after the arms decision of abstention, the vote in a Labour fortress fell even below the 1931 level ; and it is worth noting that the Conservatives, whose vote fell far less, circulated a leaflet pointing out the unity of the National Government and the National Council of Labour on arms policy. The National Government is able to boast that there was never such a weak opposition in political history. Neville Chamberlain, in his first speech as Prime Minister, at Birmingham, on July 3, declared :

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> It seems to me to be quite clear that if we were to go to the country again to-morrow, we should be returned with a majority not less remarkable than that which was given to us in 1935.

Unfortunately, there is no basis yet for disputing this, until big changes have been achieved ; and we have to be prepared for the risk of another sudden general election in the period succeeding Bournemouth, if Bournemouth repeats the picture of Edinburgh. The Conservative *Spectator* writes, July 30, 1937 :

> A party thus disintegrated and vacillating can give the Government no anxiety and the electors no hope.

The Liberal *Manchester Guardian*, reviewing Mr. Attlee's recent book and his rejection of the People's Front, reaches the conclusion, August 20, 1937 :

> So long as Labour deliberately limits its appeal, as Mr. Attlee would have it do, there seems small reason to expect much change in its position.

HOW can we change this situation ? This is the real issue before the Bournemouth Labour Party Conference. The main problem before the Bournemouth Conference will not appear on the agenda. But it is in the minds of every serious Labour Party worker, no less than of the wider democratic and peace forces, among whom the Labour Party, as the party of the organised working-class, could exercise a rightful leadership, if only the eyes of the Executive were opened to the possibilities. *That problem is how to transform the present disastrous political situation in Britain ; how to end the confusion, paralysis and disorganisation of the working-class and democratic forces opposed to the National Government ; how to range Britain with the world democratic and peace front which could block the path to war and open the way to new advance in Britain.* This issue may not yet be faced at Bournemouth, though it is to be hoped that it will be voiced. But sooner or later it will have to be faced, and sooner rather than later, for on it depends the political future in Britain no less than the future of the Labour Party.

WHAT is the political perspective seen by the Labour Party leadership ? How do they see the way forward to change the present position ? It is extremely difficult to find in their utterances any sign of a political perspective save the routine party managers' optimism (accompanied by private pessimism and defeatism) which is equivalent to a repudiation of any attempt to think politically.

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The Chairman of the Labour Party Executive, Dr. Dalton, declares, in a speech at Leicester on July 17, that "if a General Election were held now, Labour would win exactly 99 more seats"—and appears to find this a hopeful estimate and answer to the problems of the present situation. The *Daily Herald*, in a typical editorial, brushes aside six years of defeat as of no significance:

> In the history of a political party six years is nothing. And it is a matter of obvious fact that the electoral success of the "National" Coalition has been based first and foremost on a remarkable run of pure luck.
>
> The return of a Labour Government at the very moment when trade depression began to sweep the world, the return of the "National" Government before the world-wide recovery, the snap election of 1935, when the national unity inspired by Italian aggression was used and abused—what have any of these to do with the relative merits of Conservatism and Socialism? (*Daily Herald*, August 19, 1937.)

The bottomless complacency of this outlook, which can live through six years of world crisis and learn from it nothing save that all this has nothing to do with the abstract issues of "Conservatism" and "Socialism," defies analysis. No doubt in 1932 German Social Democracy, after three years of electoral slump, could have argued that "in the history of a political party six years is nothing." Unfortunately, in the present epoch very much less than six years can be decisive.

IN the recent period two important books by leading members of the Labour Party on its present problems have appeared.* What do we learn from them? When the publication of a work by the leader of the Labour Party on *The Labour Party in Perspective* was announced, hopes were entertained that some attempt would be made to grapple with the problem of the present situation and show the way forward. These hopes were doomed to disappointment. The one thing that is most conspicuously lacking in *The Labour Party in Perspective* is a perspective of the Labour Party. This applies equally to the past and to the future. Mr. Attlee describes the narrowing of the basis of the Labour Party from its old all-inclusive basis of "unity of working-class interests" (p. 36) to its present doctrinaire basis, but without any recog-

**The Labour Party in Perspective.* By C. R. Attlee. Gollancz. 7s. 6d. (Left Book Club edition, 2s. 6d.)
The People's Front. By G. D. H. Cole. Gollancz. 7s. 6d. (Left Book Club edition, 2s. 6d.)

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nition of the significance of this process for the present difficulties. In this connection he quotes a deeply instructive declaration of one of the older leaders, Mr. Wardle, in the Chairman's Address of the Labour Party in 1911, as illustrating "the conception of the Labour Party at that date":

> Its strength has been its catholicity, its tolerance, its welcoming of all shades of political and even revolutionary thought, provided that its chief object, the unifying of the workers' political power, was not damaged or hindered thereby.

Where is that "welcoming of all shades of political and even revolutionary thought" for the sake of "unifying the workers' political power" to-day?

YET when it comes to facing the problems of the present day, Mr. Attlee is content—in the face of a situation in which the Labour Party has lost ground for eight years, in which its membership is less than half what it was seventeen years ago, and its parliamentary membership little more than half what it was eight years ago—to describe the old legendary picture of a continuously ascending curve: "I have seen the little group of thirty Labour members transformed into a Labour Party in the House of Commons of nearly three hundred men and women" (p. 8); "the Party has continued on its way, steadily growing in numbers and influence" (p. 9). As for the future, no basic political problem is seen; there is no sense of the realities of the present situation; the only task is continued propaganda, individual conversions of electors, until a majority is reached. "I am convinced that the achievement of power in the near future is posible if every member of the Party will do his share in making converts." (p. 280). Such is the perspective offered in the present political situation.

IN *The People's Front* of G. D. H. Cole, we are on very different ground. Here we have an extremely serious attempt to grapple with the problems of the present political situation and reach a positive answer. What is the outcome? Mr. Cole makes a very careful analysis of the present electoral situation. He shows that to win a majority Labour would require to win every single Government seat with majorities of under 6,000, while not losing a single seat itself; or alternately, to win two thirds of the Government's seats with majorities under 10,000, while allowing for a loss of one third of its own seats with majorities

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under 2,000. " Does anyone really suppose such a victory to be within sight, either at the next General Election, or, at all probably, even at the election after that ? " It is obvious that such a transformation would only be conceivable on the basis of a gigantic sweep forward of the mass movement such as is impossible on the present lines of policy and direction, denial of mass struggle, confusion and division. Yet the urgency of the situation requires a rapid massing of forces against the National Government ; we cannot wait placidly for the gradual maturing of the conditions for an absolute Labour majority. What, then, is to be done ? Mr. Cole draws the conclusion that what is required is to work for the realisation, not only of working-class unity in the Labour Party, but of a wider People's Democratic Front on the basis of an agreed immediate programme in home and foreign affairs, such as would be capable, not only to unite and organise the existing left elements, but to draw to itself the non-political mass of the working population who are at present either passive or at the mercy of " National " electoral demagogy.

IT is evident that there is here a perspective of primary political importance for consideration in the Labour Party as well as among all left elements. It may certainly be the case that the conditions are not yet ripe in Britain for the realisation of a People's Front, and that we may still have to find an intermediate stage, corresponding to present British conditions. We need to beware of premature speculations or attempts at groupings, and to realise that, while endeavouring to develop the contact of the working-class movement with all democratic and peace forces in the present struggle, the primary task is to work for the strengthening and revival of the Labour Party, and the realisation of working-class unity in the Labour Party, as the decisive factor. But these problems will undoubtedly have to be faced. What is significant is that, while this book has been widely read and discussed among the membership of the Labour Party, no attempt has so far been made by the leadership to answer the objective analysis of the Labour Party situation and prospects on which it is based. Mr. Attlee presents some of the more familiar arguments against the united working-class front and against the People's Front, without very much air of conviction. He says, however, one thing on the People's Front which is deeply instructive for the present outlook of the Labour Party leadership. He

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declares that he might be prepared to support it *if a world crisis were imminent.*

> I would not myself rule out such a thing (a People's Front) as an impossibility in the event of the imminence of a world crisis. (p. 124.)

It follows from this that for Mr. Attlee—and he represents the more alert and open-minded elements of the Labour Party leadership—there is not at present "the imminence of a world crisis."

EVEN more instructive is the recent statement by Mr. Bevin of his perspective for the Labour Party. Answering the question of an interviewer with regard to the unpromising results of recent by-elections, he replied (*Observer*, September 12, 1937):

> I think those results are very misleading. We are living in a phase that will not last. . . . Remember that we are living in times of comparative prosperity, and that the Government is the hero of the day. When times are not so fair, then it will become the villain of the piece and large masses of the electorate will turn to Labour.

Here is the one definite calculation of the present right wing trade union and labour leadership, as is shown also in the propaganda and in the Chairman's Address to Norwich—the calculation of the future slump. Last time the Labour Movement was taken by surprise by the world economic crisis and saw its Government founder. Now, looking always for the repetition of the past instead of seeing the realities of the present, they await hopefully the new slump for the National Government to collapse. In times of depression the working-class movement is informed that it is impossible to advance until better times arrive. In the period of upward trade the working-class is informed that it must wait for bad times in order to advance. Through all this there is only one consistent policy: the renunciation of the present struggle. But the present struggle determines the possibility of future advance. It is perfectly true that, if other factors do not intervene, the present stage of the trade cycle is due for a depression in Britain in the near future. But this is only one factor of the situation, which may be profoundly affected by the further development of rearmament and of the war crisis. What are we to say of a leadership that in the present world situation placidly bases all its calculations on the evolution of the normal trade cycle?

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BEHIND all this outlook and approach lies one common character, which is at the root of the present failure of the Labour Movement to advance. What is this root character? Complacency; denial of the urgency of the situation; denial of the necessity rapidly to defeat the National Government. And that means, if analysed to its real essence: confidence in capitalism, *confidence in the National Government*. This is the real issue behind the question of the arms vote, which is not a question of for or against armaments in the abstract, but of supporting or fighting the National Government. It is true that the same leaders who are for supporting the Government on the arms issue complain at the same time that they have previously been "betrayed" by the Government when they have given it support ("we were shamefully betrayed"—Mr. Bevin at Norwich, with reference to the support given by the Margate Trades Union Congress to the National Government over Abyssinia). But a complaint of "betrayal" can only be lodged against friends, not enemies. And the fact remains that they are again giving it confidence, as was shown by Sir Walter Citrine's reply at Norwich, when he indignantly repudiated the possibility that the National Government could use its armed force on the side of fascism, and affirmed that Mr. Eden had given the most unqualified pledges in support of collective security. If this is the outlook, what basis is there for opposition to the National Government? And in that case what future is there for the Labour Party in the present situation (save to go on, in accordance with its leaders' instructions, peacefully converting the electors, one by one, to abstract socialism, while practical affairs are handled by the National Government)?

THE arms issue cannot be taken in isolation, because it is the burning focus of the relations of the Labour Movement and the National Government. Defeat of the National Government on the arms vote would not mean the prevention of whatever armaments are necessary to maintain collective peace and defeat fascism. It would only mean the defeat of a Government which is the enemy of collective peace and in practice the pacemaker of fascist war, and its replacement by a Government which would maintain collective peace and hold fascism in check. If this is not done, the path to war is wide open. The present confusion of the Labour Movement on this issue is the reflection of a deeper confusion on the estimate of the present rôle of British imperialism. To this question it will be necessary to return, as it is not an easy question and is of decisive importance for the whole future policy. The assumption

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that the National Government, even though open to criticism on foreign policy, is arming to fight Hitler and Mussolini, is paralysing the Labour opposition and leading considerable sections to tendencies of national unity with this Government of capitalist reaction. On the same basic assumption the pacifists come forward simultaneously as the friends of Hitler and Mussolini and the opponents of rearmament. On the same basic assumption a third section, as illustrated by the article of "M.P." in the current issue, despairing of collective security as killed by the Government, and foreseeing only an imperialist war between the British Empire and fascism, proclaims the only alternatives to be "cannon-fodderism" or "war-resistance." All these are counsels of despair, assuming the inevitable war.

WHAT is needed is a positive policy that fights, on the basis of the united mass struggle and unity of all the democratic forces, to change the present situation before it is too late; that neither gives way to illusions about the National Government, nor abandons the struggle for collective security as a lost hope; but that fights on the basis of the support of the peoples to realise the collective peace front which can stem the fascist aggression, before it extends to world war. The examples of the united resistance in Spain and in China show that the threatening world war can be defeated in its initial preparatory stages, if support is given and unity is achieved. But the realisation of this aim depends above all on the changes of the situation here in Britain and the defeat of the National Government. The fight for peace and against fascism, as the minority at Norwich clearly showed, cannot be fought except on the basis of fighting the National Government. This means to lead the struggle against the National Government on all issues, including on what has become the cardinal expression of unity or opposition, the arms vote, but without separating this issue from the general fight on the whole policy, social, economic and international, of which it is the centre. The task is to develop the mass opposition to the National Government on all the issues of home and foreign policy, in order to deflect that policy, to win concessions and finally to defeat the Government. Whatever the immediate decisions at Bournemouth, this task will only become the more urgent in the period immediately following Bournemouth, and will call for common effort and new approaches from all elements that seriously wish to fight the present menacing situation and open the way to new advance in Britain.

R. P. D.

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WHAT NEXT IN BRITAIN?

By HARRY POLLITT

IN any discussion on the present policy of British Imperialism, note has to be taken that changes in the National Government since Baldwin retired have been, and are, aimed at strengthening the reactionary policy for which the National Government has stood ever since its formation in 1931.

Immediately Chamberlain became Prime Minister, he commenced directly to intervene in foreign affairs, and this intervention was recognised both in the British and Foreign press as being of an important character. It is to be noted also, that the transfer of Sir Samuel Hoare to Secretary for Home Affairs, has a significance, in the sense that this indicates a strengthening of reaction in Britain itself.

At the moment when the press is full of the so-called "firm line" that Britain is now showing in regard to piracy in the Mediterranean, it appears that there is a tendency to believe that the National Government is changing a little its previous pro-Fascist attitude. We believe that this interpretation is an entirely mistaken one. Undoubtedly, important sections of British imperialists are alarmed at the menace to British interests in South China and in the Mediterranean, but the question has only to be asked—what attitude would the National Government have taken if the British Ambassador in Shanghai had been injured by a bomb from a Soviet aeroplane, or if British ships had been sunk in the Mediterranean by Soviet submarines, and that to be contrasted with the inaction demonstrated by the National Government towards Japan and Italy, to see the situation in its correct light.

Britain may now *appear* to be taking a firmer line, but we must have no illusions. It is only to protect *her* immediate interests and will not alter the fundamental line of the Government's foreign policy, even though the Nyon agreement is a very important step forward, both from a political and practical viewpoint.

It is vital to recall at this moment how, immediately Chamberlain became Prime Minister, his first act was to send secret letters to Mussolini —letters which we were assured were of a particularly "warm and friendly character." The world press immediately recognised the importance of this interchange of correspondence, and it needs to be borne in mind at the present time when people are in danger of being deceived by the so-called stronger attitude that is now being taken towards Italy. It

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needs also to be remembered that, in spite of the insult commented on by the British press, when Von Neurath cancelled his visit to London at the time of the cruiser Leipzig incident in the Mediterranean in July, Chamberlain renewed the invitation in particularly cordial terms.

British Imperialism, for generations, has fundamentally always had a consistent and very obvious line in all its foreign policy, in spite of certain apparent contradictions and vacillations. This policy is to oppose all popular and revolutionary movements, however much its real rôle may have been disguised, and it has always inspired and on occasions directly led the suppression of such movements. The record of British Imperialism in the Empire ; its treatment of colonial peoples, and its action during the critical years of the Russian Revolution from 1917-20—is ample proof of this. Since its direct intervention against the Soviet Union was put a stop to by the equally direct intervention of the British working class as typified by the strike on the " Jolly George " in May, 1920, British Imperialism has always supported those powers in Europe which it felt would be the vanguard of attacks on the Soviet Union. The proof of this is to be seen in its attitude towards Japan's conquest of Manchuria ; in its support of Hitler's rearmament after refusing the right of a democratic Germany to rearm from the time of the Versailles Treaty down to the time Hitler came to power. It has carried forward its policy of support for Japan in the Far East, and Germany in the West, under the slogans of —" supporting bulwarks against Bolshevism in the Far East and West."

The National Government having financed, armed and given valuable political support to Hitler, now attempts to use this very rearmament of Nazi Germany as the pretext to launch an armaments programme itself, so vast that it has intensified the world race in armaments to an unprecedented extent.

All serious minded people recognise that Britain was responsible for the betrayal of Abyssinia, a betrayal that, as we shall show later, is bound to have further serious repercussions in the international situation.

The policy of the National Government in regard to the Fascist attack on Spain has surely demonstrated the whole character of its policy and its desire to do everything in its power to strengthen reactionary and Fascist attacks against popular movements. It was responsible for forcing non-intervention on France ; it was the first Government to declare that volunteers for the International Brigade were illegal. In fact, the National Government has pursued its pro-Franco policy to such an extent that Britain, whose proud boast used to be that it was " Mistress of the Seas," has allowed its Navy to become the laughing stock of the world and the subject of cheap music-hall jokes ; it has even put one of its key fortresses in the Mediterranean—Gibraltar—in great jeopardy. It was left to a tramp steamer under Captain " Potato " Jones to reveal to the

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people of Britain the lies that were told in Parliament about the entrances to Bilbao being mined and not safe for British shipping.

What then is the basis of the foreign policy of the National Government in relation to the present situation in Spain in particular ?

Some of the most reactionary of Britain's imperialists, like Sir Auckland Geddes, have not hesitated to declare quite recently that British interests in Spain are far safer under Franco than under the Spanish Government.

Furthermore, we believe that the National Government desires the defeat of the Spanish Government in the hope that repercussions in France would strengthen reaction there and lead to the defeat of the People's Front Government. Only children in politics refuse to believe, for example, that the Bank of England and the National Government, too, have not more than a direct interest in some phases of the financial crises that occur from time to time and which have threatened the stability of the People's Front Government in France.

British imperialists undoubtedly hope that with the defeat of the People's Front Government in France, a Government of the Right would come to power with whom Britain could work in closer co-operation, especially towards its main aim in foreign policy—the formation of a Western Regional Pact and the separation of France from the U.S.S.R.

Alongside this it has to be noted that well-informed capitalist opinion in Britain has no hesitation in declaring that decisions have been reached by the Government to recognise the conquest of Abyssinia. Alarm is being expressed in important sections of the Peace Movement in Britain at the substantial rumours that are circulating in political circles about the desire of the National Government to revise the League of Nations—especially those articles of the Covenant which provide for sanctions against an aggressor, in such a way as to facilitate the return to the League of Japan, Italy and Germany.

Because of this combination of factors, Britain undoubtedly occupies the key point in the international situation. In the same way the position of the democratic and peace forces in Britain who are opposed to the policy of the National Government, is of interest to the peace and democratic movements through the whole world. But what *is* the position in Britain at the present time ? Just as divisions amongst democratic states in Europe prevent a common policy being carried out that would restrain Fascist aggression and safeguard peace, so divisions in the Labour and Peace Movements in Britain prevent the organisation of a really formidable common front against the whole line of policy of the National Government. This weakness is a source of political strength to the National Government, and it is responsible for the present strong position it undoubtedly enjoys in the country.

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This is fully reflected in all parliamentary by-elections at the moment. Labour's vote is declining or stagnant, while nearly 50 per cent. of the population who are entitled to vote in these by-elections are refraining from doing so. The Tory Press openly scoff at the position of Labour as revealed in election results.

> Of all the possibilities of politics, the swing of the pendulum used to be accounted the most certain. A Government in office, though it might be of all the talents, though its administration might be brilliantly successful, was bound to expect that by-elections would go against it, that there would be a big turnover of votes to the other side. The result of the election at Springburn confirms the lesson taught by the 36 others since 1935, that the pendulum has ceased to swing.
>
> Of the 37 by-elections to this Parliament the Government have won 25, the Socialists nine and Independents three. The preponderance of votes given to the Government is not less striking. Most significant of all is the diminution in the Opposition polls. It has been the exception for a Socialist or Liberal candidate to win even as many votes as his predecessors received in 1935. So far from making any recovery from their overwhelming defeat of that year, both Opposition parties show a further decline. It is clear that the Government now commands an even greater measure of confidence than when an overwhelming majority was given it by the country. (*Daily Telegraph*, September 9, 1937.)

It is clear that there is no definite distinction between the policy of the National Government and those who claim to be in opposition to it, and this is reflected in the abstention of 50 per cent. of the electorate.

In the Labour Movement itself, acute divisions are taking place in regard to the Arms policy of the National Government. In July, 1936, it was quite correctly argued by the Labour Party that the foreign policy of the National Government was of such a character, that it was impossible for the Parliamentary Labour Party to vote for the Arms Estimates in Parliament. In July, 1937, however, when the foreign policy of the Government has become even more reactionary, and when the international situation has reached a most critical point, the Parliamentary Labour Party, by a narrow majority of 6, decide to abstain from voting on the Arms Estimates in Parliament. The Trades Union Congress has adopted a statement of policy, the essence of which is, that while critical of the Government's foreign policy, support must be given to rearmament. The same statement will feature prominently in the Labour Party Conference discussions at Bournemouth.

We have to take note of the fact that even those who oppose supporting the Government's rearmament programme because they disagree with the foreign policy of the Government, are as yet hostile to any suggestion of developing Unity within the Labour Movement, or taking any positive steps that can attract to the support of the Labour Movement the big mass of democratic and progressive opinion which certainly exists in Britain. No one in leading circles of the Labour Party has the slightest belief in

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the possibility of a Labour Government being elected at the next General Election, nor if the truth were known, any desire that such a Government should be elected, because of the character of the responsibilities that power would involve.

It is this situation therefore which renders the position of the mass movement of the workers in Great Britain so important to the whole international Labour Movement. It is this situation that demands the ceaseless campaign for Unity and for the gathering together of all the Labour, democratic and peace forces of Britain, so that an effective common fight can be waged against every aspect of the National Government's policy.

We have no doubt at all that if such a common front is built up, mass pressure can soon bring about changes in the policy of the Government. We have no doubt that the present fatalism and defeatism which is rampant amongst the opposition forces can be ended, and that the pressure of the masses would soon lead to entirely different perspectives being opened out than exist at the present time. The forces against the National Government would prepare the way for its defeat at the next General Election and result in the return of a majority of Labour and democratic members to Parliament, who could form a Government which would at once transform the situation at home and abroad.

Such a Government could immediately improve the economic and social position of the masses of the people ; it could repeal the anti-democratic legislation which the Tories have been responsible for introducing ; and it could, by the whole character of its foreign policy, strengthen the peace forces in Europe and safeguard democracy. And if it was found on examination that the collective resources of the powers interested in peace and not war were insufficient to restrain Fascist aggression, such a Government would immediately receive the fullest support for any increase of armaments necessary to defend peace.

In building up the unity necessary to achieve these aims the affiliation of the Communist Party to the Labour Party becomes a vital question which cannot be relegated to conferences two years hence. The Fascist aggression and war preparations will not stand still for two years ; the National Government will not suspend its attacks on the working class, through the present policy of rising prices and increased exploitation, for two years ; and the common interests of all sections of the working-class movement demand the all-round strengthening of the Labour Party, a strengthening to which the affiliation of the Comminist Party would in no small measure help to contribute.

The working-class forces of Britain must not neglect other sections of the population willing to unite against reaction. Such people as those associated with the professions, the small shopkeepers and business men,

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the small farmers—all these people are profoundly disturbed at the present situation. They see no hope ahead. They have watched their standards slowly worsened and are trying to find a way out from their exploitation by the big Trusts and Bankers, from the burdens that rearmament is placing on them. It is from these sections of the population that big sacrifices will be demanded if war breaks out, in the sense that their husbands and sons will be amongst the first to be conscripted.

While conditions may not yet be ripe for the developing of a People's Front movement in Britain, because the development of differentiation in the older political parties has not yet reached a point where dissatisfaction with present policies has given place to a firm determination to pool all resources in a common fight against the National Government, nevertheless a basis of co-operation is undoubtedly possible of achievement in many phases of the current struggle against the policy of the big Trusts, Bankers and National Government.

A further important point in the policy to be adopted by the mass movement in its struggle to overthrow the National Government arises in connection with elections, Municipal and Parliamentary.

All splitting the working class and progressive vote must be avoided so that every reactionary candidate and every supporter of the National Government can be defeated. In this connection the coming November Municipal Elections will have a special significance, for it is quite possible that the National Government will launch a General Election after these November elections because of the confusion and division within the Labour Movement. The Municipal Elections will act as a political barometer of the country.

The successful carrying out of this line of policy, so essential for the maintenance of democracy and peace and the improvement of the position of the mass of the people, demands a strengthening of the whole political life of the working class movement ; it demands more collective thinking, discussion and leadership, more effective linking up of the daily struggle against capitalism with the final aim of the working class ; it demands the raising of the ideological level of the Communist Party and the whole Labour Movement by the wide popularisation of the principles of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

The mass propaganda of Marxism is one of the most urgent tasks that have to be undertaken in the present situation. So many people are perplexed and in doubt ; confusion is so rampant and at the same time the interest in Marxism was never so widespread.

In the struggle against the open class enemy and those false policies within the Labour Movement which have led to the present situation it

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occupies, the satisfaction of the hunger for learning is one of the most important weapons.

At the same time the mass movement must exercise vigilance against the penetration into its ranks of elements of an unstable and unsatisfactory character ; thus it will be able to carry out a much more effective fight against the counter-revolutionary policy of Trotskyism.

Our immediate aim is to defeat the National Government. This defeat would give new hope and confidence in the prospects of a better life for the majority of the British people. A Government whose policy was firmly grounded in its intention to maintain peace and democracy could transform the entire international situation ; at the same time as it was hemming in the Fascist aggressors it would be strengthening the struggle against Fascism itself, especially the struggle of the German and Italian peoples, and would be opening up the way for an all round advance towards the Socialist state of society.

If the workers of Great Britain took more serious note of international experiences, and of the successes of mass movements in other lands, if they drew more attention to the amazing achievements of socialist construction in the Soviet Union, the fight for unity would be very definitely strengthened and its aim nearer success.

We are confident that the tactics outlined in this article can be fulfilled. Let us end with a quotation from Dimitrov at the 7th Congress, which time and time again should be studied in order to breathe into our work that note of confidence and inspiration which is sometimes dulled by the intricate character and difficulties of the situation. The words are as follows :

> To us, the workers, and not to the social parasites and idlers, belongs the world—a world built by the hands of the workers. The present rulers of the capitalist world are but temporary rulers.
>
> The proletariat is the real master, to-morrow's master of the world. And it must enter upon its historical rights, take into its hands the reins of government in every country, all over the world.
>
> We are disciples of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin. We should be worthy of our great teachers.
>
> With Stalin at their head the millions of our political army, overcoming all difficulties and courageously breaking through all barriers, must and will level to the ground the fortress of capitalism and achieve the victory of socialism through the whole world.

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THE STRUGGLE FOR ANTI-FASCIST UNITY IN SPAIN

By JOHN LANGDON-DAVIES *

IN the earlier days of the Spanish civil war it was the fashion—justifiable at the time—to exaggerate the unity of the anti-fascist front ; and indeed those of us who had followed the political and revolutionary history of the Spanish people were astonished to see how well the various groups were holding together. But we knew that eventually trouble was bound to break out. And this trouble was bound to take a certain definite shape, to lead to a specific crisis. The crisis came in May, 1937, and the Negrin Government was its result. Any other solution of the crisis would have led to the victory of reaction and international fascism.

The Negrin Government came for two reasons, first because the fundamental crisis within the anti-fascist forces had come to a head, second because the Caballero Government did not have the qualities necessary for the resolution of that crisis.

The Negrin Government was established thanks to the initiative and close co-operation of the Spanish Communist Party. This does not of course mean that it is the final form which that Party desires the government of Spain to take.

Critics of the Spanish Communist Party and of communism in general have attacked the Negrin Government and claimed that it is a surrender to capitalist democracy ; and H. N. Brailsford has gone so far as to say that the Spanish Communist Party " is no longer primarily a party of the industrial workers or even a Marxist Party." I am not in a position to give an official O.K. to the Marxism of the Spanish Communist Party as I am in no sense a spokesman of official communism, but as an anti-fascist and a close observer of Spanish facts I propose to show in this article that in creating the Negrin Government the Spanish Communist Party has judged events correctly and saved the cause of anti-fascism for the time being at least.

*The auther of this article will be debating against Fenner Brockway on October 15 at Friends' House, Euston Road, on the motion: " That the suppression of the P.O.U.M. was essential to the anti-fascist cause in Spain.

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To understand the crisis of last May and the inevitability of the Negrin Government one must have at least a superficial knowledge of Spain's economic history. Spain is historically the country where every social-economic revolution has failed to reach decisive conclusion. In consequence classes which elsewhere have had their hour of triumph have had nothing in Spain but a ghostly existence. Above all Spain has never succeeded in giving birth to a bourgeois capitalist class capable of cutting the umbilical chord of feudalism and entering on an independent life.

One reason for this is of some importance to us now: the defeat of feudalism by capitalism, as we all know, is the substituting of a class possessing money-power for a class possessing the less potent and more obsolete land-power. In Spain during one hundred-and-fifty years, the land-power class imported from America ready-made money-power to the tune of 875 tons of gold and 45,720 tons of silver. The effect of this on Spain's economic evolution was tragic. The possession of the counters of money-power by the land-power class prevented a true and independent money-power class from rising up to perform its historic task of emancipating the community from the vices, social and economic, of feudalism. Instead of the free play of social forces leading to industrial production we find a dismal history repeated again and again: factories started by royal or state subsidy instead of as a natural reaction to social need; their production fettered by every sort of feudal ineptitude until they died away leaving an undeveloped countryside, a tradeless nation and a starving people.

Whatever capitalism exists in Spain is due to two comparatively trivial causes: first, Spain's neutrality during the war produced a mushroom war industry and, though most of the profits were afterwards lost by speculation in German marks, this laid the foundation for the Catalan industrial capitalism, such as it is, and it continued to exist after the post-war crisis thanks to heavy protective duties; second, the defenceless condition of the Spanish worker, his low wages and lack of those defences which come with higher stages of capitalism, marked him down as the prey of foreign exploiters. Thus, to give one example, the cotton producing firm of Coates, finding it need pay the Catalan workers even less than the Scots, built factories in Catalunya. But even the Catalan textile industry remained in the pre-concentration stage of capitalism.

Apart from these rudiments of industry the industrial worker in Spain finds most of his employment in transport, public utilities, distributive trades. In short, the failure of bourgeois capitalism to free itself from feudalism has lead to great weakness in numbers and a lopsided development of the proletariat; and, incidentally to a relatively stronger position of the petite bourgeoisie. Long before July, 1936, the petite bourgeoisie in Catalunya had realised its identity of interest with the workers as

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contrasted with the feudal pseudo-capitalist ; the events of that month threw this class throughout the rest of government-controlled Spain into genuine alliance with the workers. It is this natural alliance between skilled workers and petite bourgeoisie due to the rudimentary state of capitalism which has been distorted in certain quarters into a substitution of bourgeois democracy for revolution as the aim of the Spanish government. This is nonsense. It would be impossible to name a single capitalist connected with the Negrin Government ; that government marks the coming of the historic moment of social development in Spain, when the interests of the petite bourgeoisie, thanks to the foundering of the feudal class with its mask of weak capitalism, merge with the workers.

But more important than this, the Negrin Government represents the one line of political development that can bring in the peasant and fit him to take part in a revolution which is capable of bearing fruit. I assume that Brailsford and all those other critics who are so concerned that the Spanish government should be " Marxist " will agree that the revolutionary competence of any Spanish government must be proved by its ability to achieve this task. As I have said, I cannot claim a right to set the seal of orthodoxy upon the Marxism of the Spanish Communist Party, and I have no desire at all to drag in the names of Stalin and Trotsky into this article. Nor are these names necessary ; we are faced at this point with even greater names, with an even more important dispute. The astonishing thing about the critics who say that the Spanish Communists have ceased to be a Marxist party is that they all seem to fall back themselves into the rankest and most unashamed Bakuninism.

The peasant, unless he is led by the industrial workers of the town, is inevitably a conservative or an anarchist. Anarchism is the revolutionary protest against feudalism. In July, 1936, the anti-fascist progressive forces consisted of the bourgeois socialism (mild Manchester Guardianism) of the petite bourgeoisie, the revolutionary socialism (never Transporthousism) of the town workers, and the anarchism of the peasant and of the mass of unskilled workers who were really peasants under the skin. It is this last fact that has been consistently ignored by a certain type of critic of the Negrin Government, and we must enlarge upon it. (We must add that in spite of its " idealism " anarchism is defenceless against attracting to itself the *lumpenproletariat* down to the criminal classes, the pistoleros and bandits, whom Weitling regarded as the true revolutionaries, a heresy which Marx traversed so long ago as 1846.)

The true backbone of the revolutionary forces on July 19, 1936, was undoubtedly anarcho-syndicalism and it achieved its greatest successes in industrial Catalunya and especially in Barcelona. The paradox that has led many observers astray is that a form of revolutionary movement which is technically the historic opposition to feudalism took control in

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the one part of Spain which has a considerable measure of industrial capitalism. There it achieved a kind of revolution, it is true, but a revolution which no Marxist could believe in. Why ?

Pure anarchism could only appeal to the peasant class. Anarcho-syndicalism was an attempt to modify peasant anarchism to fit it for peasants migrated to the town and swept into industry so rapidly that they remained peasants even in the factories and workshops. The only reason why Barcelona is an anarchist city is that Barcelona capitalists enticed thousands of Murcians, Andalusians, Aragonese from their fields and anarchist-breeding waste lands, into the cheap industrial labour market of the mushroom war-boom. The situation was not unlike that which faced the Yankee New Englander when he saw his America invaded by the peasantry of Europe. The Catalan capitalist wanted cheap labour and welcomed it from any quarter only to find his bourgeois peace of mind menaced by the anarchism of the fields and he kept this anarchism artificially alive by countering it with the foulest weapons of feudalism. We need not sympathise with him ; what concerns us is that when the peasant came to Barcelona he tried to fight capitalism there with the weapons he had traditionally used against feudalism. And with reckless bravery in July, 1936, anarcho-syndicalism proceeded to lead Spain to yet one more of its splendid and heroic revolutionary failures. The task of the Negrin government is to turn that inevitable anarcho-syndicalist failure into a socialist success. To do so it has to undo a great deal which on the surface glitters enough to mislead superficial foreign observers. I cannot do better at this point than quote a Spanish writer on the nature of anarchism and its failure to win revolutions, for Spain is the country of what may be called permanent revolutionary failure.

Writing in 1935, this Spanish Marxist says : " The anarchists politically —*they* would say ' a-politically '—organised in the F.A.I. and industrially in the C.N.T. enjoyed during the years 1930-2 great support among the workers and peasants . . . . But the anarchists then as in 1873, could not comprehend the character of the revolution which took place in Spain . . . . If in 1873 the Revolution was exclusively bourgeois-democratic, in 1931 it was democratic-socialist and *they tried to ignore the first phase, the bourgeois phase of the revolution* . . . .

" ' Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement,' Lenin said. Anarchism, although apparently revolutionary, is not really so, because *it proposes unrealisable objectives.* That is why it failed, in spite of favourable circumstances, in 1873. That is why it failed likewise in 1931-4.

" The anarchists have not understood that the revolution of social liberation must not be made solely on their behalf, but for the majority of the population . . . . Anarchist exclusiveness has brought it about

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that its directors orientate their subversive movements towards the overwhelming triumph of anarchism. Naturally the masses of the people who are not anarchists withdraw themselves from an insurrection which is completely sectarian . . . .

" While the socialists protect the petit bourgeois, the anarchists unconsciously served the ends of the counter-revolutionary capitalists. *Their strife against the socialists, having no revolutionary end,* was *reactionary* " (italics are mine).

These words have a double significance when we realise that they were written by Maurin, the dead leader of that party which for its own purposes later allied itself with the " uncontrollable " elements of the very anarchists so severely criticised, and took a lead in shooting down working-class socialists and communists in the streets of Barcelona in May, 1937. At the time Maurin was writing, his party still toyed with the hope of boring from within the socialist parties. When the U.G.T. (socialist) trade union organisation firmly resisted the P.O.U.M., this party turned round and offered itself as political leader to the anarchists, seeking to perpetuate the very faults of practice and theory pilloried by Maurin in the passage I have quoted, and abusing the socialist-communists as counter-revolutionaries when they tried to remedy them.

Fortunately the great mass of anarcho-syndicalist workers obeyed their responsible leadership and refused to be turned against their socialist class-brothers, leaving the work of " Fifth Column " tactics to the P.O.U.M. and the uncontrollable pistolero element. This anarcho-syndicalist discipline was the more remarkable when we realise that May, 1937 marked the passing of the balance of power, of workers' leadership in Barcelona, from Spanish traditional anarchism to international revolutionary socialism. It took a week of horror to initiate the change, and I do not think we have yet (August, 1937) seen the final stage of the process of evolution. No one who was there will forget the nightmare which the P.O.U.M. paper summed up fantastically by saying: " For three days the streets of Barcelona belonged to the workers." Actually not a soul could use the streets for any purpose whatever. Workers belonging to the U.G.T. and workers belonging to the C.N.T. stood by their weapons behind barricades and the streets were a battlefield.

We must distinguish very carefully between two things in the May crisis in Barcelona. There was the strife which did *not* come off. This was the general holocaust which would have resulted if C.N.T. and U.G.T., anarchist and socialist, had come to blows. There was the strife which *did* come off, and which was designed by its instigators to lead on to this other strife. This was street fighting between anarchist uncontrollable minorities and the P.O.U.M. against the government forces. Men trying desperately to bring about a slaughter of communists,

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socialists, republicans were urged on by the P.O.U.M. paper, *La Batalla*, when every other paper including the least "controllable" anarchist papers tried to save the situation. Their efforts received the staccato applause of hidden "pacos," fifth column fascists, firing from the roofs on all who passed so as to increase the confusion. The strife that did *not* come off would have been a fatal split in the anti-fascist ranks. Not so the strife that *did* come off: that was the work of men deliberately playing Franco's game. Some were no doubt in fascist pay, others were such imbeciles that they were willing to do the dirty work without payment.

So much for the background: we can now come back to the two reasons which I gave at the beginning of my article for the coming of the Negrin Government.

The crisis within the anti-fascist forces was precisely the growing chaos inevitable in a coalition of incompatibles. While the other entities within the anti-fascist forces were solely concerned with winning a civil war, what Maurin called "anarchist exclusiveness" was once more "orientating their subversive movements towards the overwhelming triumph of anarchism" and in so doing had so disorganised the rearguard that the civil war could not be won. To say that the civil war was the exclusive concern of the other elements does not imply in the least that they had turned their backs on revolution. The art of revolution is like the art of chess: each move until the last is aimed not at checkmating the enemy there and then, but at creating a position that will lead on logically to a final and overwhelming attack when the time comes. Many a game of chess has been lost by going after premature and partial successes, and many a revolution has proved abortive through the same false tactics. The divided popular forces of Spain have been acting rather like two partners at a chess board playing alternative moves. The anarcho-syndicalist has been all for quick and showy victories; he has used his move to attack a bishop here and a castle there, and he has made it impossible for his partner to develop a sound plan against the real adversary which must be checkmated if both partners are to win. More than this, in the course of the game the anarcho-syndicalist partner has not scrupled to spoil his partner's plans whenever they have emerged. The first thing that the Negrin Government means is the abandoning of the idea of partners playing alternative moves and the substitition of unity of political command so that there may be unity of action.

And now let us come down to brass tacks. Let us consider the sort of thing that has been happening in Spain, the sort of problem which any government must solve to remain a government in Spain to-day and to lead the workers to the defeat of fascism. I shall make these matters as specific as possible for the benefit of those who prefer facts to theory.

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I. A government in time of civil war must have full powers to organise industry on a war footing.

In Barcelona the chief war industries are in the control of anarcho-syndicalist unions. They have been organised according to anarcho-syndicalist theory. This means that they have to a large extent been a law unto themselves ; for anarcho-syndicalism is opposed to the State on principle and in practice this has meant :—

(*a*) A six-hour day in the munition factories leading to a restricted output and the starving of the front for munitions.

(*b*) A refusal to accept state control and therefore centralised planning ; result—chaos instead of development according to war needs.

(*c*) What munitions have been made have not been handed over to the government. Probably there have been as many hand-grenades, bombs, bullets and lethal apparatus generally delivered over to anarchist organisations and stored for anarchist uses as have ever been sent against Franco. In short—a cruel lack of munitions at the front and ample for the private rearguard armies of the C.N.T.-F.A.I.

I would ask the critics of the Negrin government, of the Spanish Communist Party, of the U.G.T. and of the P.S.U.C. if it is not sheer idiocy to accuse these bodies of counter-revolutionary intent when they go about to put an end to such a farcical situation. I have myself seen anarchist-made armoured cars delivered over to anarchist organisations and taken out into the streets by anarchists to shoot down socialists and communists. It was during the three days when, according to the P.O.U.M., the streets of Barcelona belonged to the workers. After that I cannot see the question of Marx versus Bakunin as an academic matter.

II. A government in time of civil war must consolidate its financial structure and its economic strength. As far at least as Barcelona is concerned the fact that certain industries have been organised on anarcho-syndicalist lines has led to the crippling of government finances. The richest part of Spain, the part which ought to have been able to finance the rest, has had to beg subsidies from the Valencia Government in order to keep going.

Here is a concrete example : the Barcelona tramways are controlled by a C.N.T. union. They are making very large profits since the salariat and the shareholders have both been financially liquidated. It would be thought that these profits would go towards the winning of the war ; that in fact the tramways would be state-owned. But that would be contrary to anarchist theory. It would admit the existence of the State. Therefore the profits of the Barcelona tramways go straight into the pockets of the union leaders in control and what they do with them is their business.

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Exactly the same is true of every other paying industry run on anarcho-syndicalist principles, but we may single out as a flagrant example the lucrative public amusements industry. Do the left opponents of Spanish Communists seriously wish us to believe that the determination that all industries shall be controlled by the State for the consolidating of its economic strength against fascism is a surrender of the workers' revolution to bourgeois democracy ?

III. A government containing representatives of workers' organisations must be sure that those representatives have the confidence of the men they represent and that they will be capable of insuring the carrying out of any decree they may make as part of the government.

And here I must make a digression. Nothing is more astonishing to anyone who knows the facts about Spain than to be told that the Barcelona Government is a liberal bourgeois government trying to suppress the revolutionary worker. At no time since the first week of the struggle has there not been a majority of workers' representatives in that government ; revolutionary socialists, revolutionary anarcho-syndicalists, revolutionary peasants. To pretend that any difference of opinion between government and governed has been simply an example of bourgeois democracy holding down the workers is to show criminal ignorance. Nor were the workers' representatives a voted down minority ; they were part of a cabinet issuing decrees by unanimous decision.

Now take the position of the C.N.T.-F.A.I. representatives both at Barcelona and at Valencia. They voted for certain decrees and then later these decrees were ignored by the very organisations that they were supposed to represent. They voted for the municipalisation of the industries they represented and then the industries refused to be municipalised. Is it counter-revolutionary to insist that no government could carry on in these circumstances ? In the Barcelona Government the C.N.T. leaders voted to municipalise the tramways, but the tramwaymen's leaders resisted all attempts to enforce the decree. The object of those forces which have set up the Negrin Government is not to give the tramways back to Barcelona Traction Ltd., but to take them out of the hands of C.N.T.-F.A.I. Ltd. and to give them to the community for the better organising of the community in the fight against fascism.

Nor is the matter of the Barcelona trams an isolated case ; it is an example of the vicious working of anarchist theory when it has to be put into practice.

IV. Any government in time of civil war must be in a position to impose discipline. The object of those who have set up the Negrin Government has not been to replace revolutionary discipline with bourgeois discipline as many superficial " left " critics seem to believe, but to put an end to revolutionary indiscipline so that true revolutionary discipline may eventually come.

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Let us put things quite concretely. I would like to know what these critics would have done if faced with the following problems:

(*a*) To stop the murder by "persons unknown" of all tramway workers who belonged to the U.G.T. instead of to the predominating C.N.T. Does he know that in the first two or three months of 1937 rather more than 150 such murders took place in Barcelona alone, all unpunished? Note that these were murders of workers by workers. Not even the fourth international or the fourth dimension can turn a tram driver into a capitalist because he belongs to the U.G.T. It is extraordinary that our super-Marxists justify the murder of tramway workers if they happen to belong to a Marxist rather than a Bakuninist union.

One point that has escaped the notice of the I.L.P.-P.O.U.M. is that anarchism is not a *class* division but a sect. To an anarchist the tramway worker who is a Marxist is a heretic, and that over-rules the fact that he is still a worker. Anarchism is not a class-war struggle so much as a sort of twentieth century Arian controversy. "Left" critics should bear this in mind when deciding what they would do to put a stop to murders of Barcelona tramwaymen belonging to the U.G.T.

(*b*) To disarm the illegal Patrulles de Control. These bodies, originally an *ad hoc* anti-fascist secret police with representatives of all parties, behaved in such an arbitrary manner that first the U.G.T. withdrew its representatives and then the Barcelona Government, including the C.N.T.-F.A.I. representatives, outlawed them; and yet they continued to exist barricaded in their buildings, armed to the teeth, mixing private vengeance with public justice. In the May rising I spent five days within a few yards of two of their headquarters, watching them fire every sort of machine gun, rifle, bomb and handgrenade, and throughout that time nobody knew on what side they were. They must have had a great deal of fun keeping everyone guessing, and when it was all over they announced in the sweetest way that they supported the government, by then in full control. Could any Marxist or any sane person hope to establish a true revolutionary order when private armies such as these did as they pleased? Can anyone but a fool think it counter-revolutionary to determine to abolish them?

(*c*) Is it possible to imagine the heads of a government in war-time consenting to all their telephone conversations being tapped by representatives of an organisation with sectarian aims of its own? That was the situation in Spain. The President, the war minister, the heads of the various parties within the popular front, generals carrying out secret military plans, all had to submit to their telephone conversations being overheard by anarchist officials whose very sense of honour forced them to use all information for the sectarian purposes of anarchism. Of course if one is able to distort the facts sufficiently to believe that the anarcho-syndicalist censorship of the telephones was exclusively used to prevent

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their use in the interests of fascism, one can find grounds for criticising the government for its famous "assault on the Telephone building" which was made the excuse for the May crisis in Barcelona; but what if this censorship was being used exclusively for the sectarian purposes of anarchism? Clearly no real Marxist could regard such a governmental action as counter-revolutionary in that case.

The telephone censorship is only one example of the practical effect of anarchist doctrine. What certain foreign critics of the left cannot understand is that "workers' control" of industry or of public service is not enough. That control has been gained locally and partially many times in Spanish revolutionary history and lost again because of the inherent errors of anarchist theory and practice. That the super-leftists should support what Maurin called anarchist "unrealisable objectives" and that the Brailsfords should argue that because a party sets itself steadily on the long road towards realisable objectives it has ceased to be "even a Marxist party," makes one realise the futility of regarding these elements as allies in the struggle against fascism.

V. A government, however revolutionary, must be in control of its frontiers. For example, it must be able to prevent gold, currency and valuables passing over whether in the hands of fleeing capitalists or of "uncontrollables" who feel that it will be as well to have an escape fund in Toulouse in case anything goes wrong. Incontrovertible evidence exists of millions of pesetas disappearing by this route.

Now most anarchists are men of honour far above pilfering even capitalist wealth. It is impossible for anyone who has met a number of them to feel anything but love and admiration for their courage, their simple comradely qualities, their honesty. But unfortunately a great deal of their charm is due to a certain childlike element which some would call sheer childishness. They and their doctrine are at the mercy of scoundrels and an anarchist scoundrel is just as dangerous to the cause of progress as a capitalist scoundrel.

The Catalan frontier villages were all in the hands of local anarchist committees; or rather of anti-fascist committees on which the anarchists had the control. Whereas these committees searched government ministers of other parties when they crossed the frontiers, they never searched an anarchist. Now supposing you were an absconding scoundrel who knew this fact, to what party would you belong as you approached the frontier? Has this sort of thing to be stopped or not? How can any sane Marxist pretend that it is counter-revolutionary to send carabineros and republican guards, 95 per cent. of whom are revolutionary socialists, to prevent the frontiers being used for sectarian anarchist purposes? And when every responsible leader of the anarcho-syndicalist

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movement recognises the need and supports the government what excuse is there for pretending that they have been " bought " ?

VI. Spain is primarily an agricultural country. No revolution can flourish there unless it is backed by the peasant. The poorest peasant classes in Spain have had a long history of unsuccessful revolution. Theory, based after all on a certain amount of historic fact, suggests that the peasant can never win until he has a powerful town workers' revolutionary party to lead him. Plain every-day fact was showing how the Spanish peasant was going direct to another of his traditional defeats because of anarchist sectarianism. Enthusiasm for their creed had led the anarchists into an ill-advised policy of forced collectivisation and reckless requisitioning of supplies and this was antagonising the whole countryside. As one peasant put it : " I prefer the old days. Then the land belonged to the landlord, but the fruits were mine ; now the land is mine, but the fruits belong to the F.A.I."

The most terrible village tragedies were being enacted in the name of false libertarian communism. At the village of Faterellas peasants resisted forced collectivisation and shot a couple of anarchists ; a punitive expedition arrived from Barcelona and killed more than half the men in the village. A dozen such incidents had already sapped the original anti-fascism of the peasantry. Once again we see the fundamental characteristic of anarchism that it is not a class war creed but a religious sect. A peasant who is not an anarchist is an enemy, however little of a kulak he may be.

Now can anyone reading these facts pretend that they need not be remedied in the interests of the workers themselves ? The coming of the Negrin government means that for the first time in Spanish history a revolutionary party, the Spanish Communist party, is wise enough to deflect revolution from blind alleys, even at the cost of apparent retracing of some steps. The Negrin Government may fail ; at the time of my writing this there are ominous signs that further trouble is to be expected ; but that does not mean that it is not necessary as a step.

The problem that the Negrin Government is facing to-day may be summarised thus : in so far as there has been a social revolution in Spain it has taken the line which history shows leads to defeat ; it has been a traditional anarchist revolution ; it ignores the bourgeois phase of the revolution ; it is not truly a revolution because it proposes unrealisable objectives ; it alienates the majority of the population because it is not even a class revolution but a sectarian one ; it has no discipline. This sort of revolution leads nowhere.

Perhaps it may be as well to point out that a bourgeois democracy nursed into being by a proletarian nucleus which has taken in Marx with its mother's milk, is likely to very be different from the bourgeois

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democracies of England, or Germany, whose proletariat had to struggle up through the night of pre-Marxian protest.

There remains the question of why the Caballero Government was incapable of facing this crisis and had to be supplanted. Just as the *Daily Mail* is sure that Caballero was in the pay of Moscow, so the *New Leader* is sure that its successor cut its teeth on a devalued rouble. But it is as useless to argue with the *New Leader* about its Stalin plot as with a fascist about the Protocols of the Elders of Zion ; only an alienist can deal with well-defined conspiracy mania. Caballero went because it was impossible with him to develop a government responding to the needs, the consciousness and the will of a class. Great man in his way, valuable in his hour, he was nevertheless in the tradition of Spanish generalissimos. It means nothing at all that bourgeois writers called him the Spanish Lenin, nor that anarcho-syndicalists regarded him simply as an ex-minister of Primo de Rivera's cabinet, though it is amusing to find that since his fall certain critics of orthodox communism have sanctified him. What matters is that he proved an arbitrary, egoistic and unco-operative leader gradually losing touch with changing realities. It is pathetic that he was in the end an old man worn out by struggle, usually on the side of light ; but that is a personal tragedy ; it could not excuse him from a growing responsibility for what was going wrong. No individual can respond to the changes in a revolutionary situation unless his personality becomes the mere reflector of the evolving revolutionary class. Caballero ceased to know or care what his immediate associates felt, much less did he feel the nature of the social evolution he was supposed to impersonate.

Thus on the one hand he l[redacted]rom the ancien régime to mishandle the war, on the othe[redacted] nothing to stimulate the growing social forces which alone could bring discipline to the rearguard. His personal régime could not meet the crisis and so the growing consciousness of the working-class functioning through an ever more concrete Communist Party discarded him. The Negrin Government is a move which does not lead to an immediate checkmate, but aims at taking an achievable step in a strategy that has in the long run a hope of final victory.

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NORWICH AND THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

By J. R. SHANLEY*

DISCUSSION at the Norwich Trades Union Congress flowed like a placid stream, the surface seldom even rippled by the clash of opinions. In a world of social turmoil, with civilisation staggering from political crisis to political crisis and reverberating with the shock of war, Congress achieved a " splendid isolation " of its own . . . an isolation from reality !

Supporters of the official line may say " Still waters run deep." Quite true. But all still water does not " run." Throw a barrier across it and a swift flowing clear turbulent stream can be converted into a stagnant pool—smooth, but dead. This in my opinion, happened at the T.U.C. I would make it clear that this barrier was not imposed on Congress by the platform. The platform participated in its erection, guided its construction and consolidated it, but the majority of the delegates helped in the task and we have to recognise that Congress in this reflected the outlook of a wide section of the Movement. To ignore this is to deceive ourselves as to the difficulties of the tasks that lie ahead.

Undoubtedly the upward trend of economic activity, giving the possibilities of wage increases by negotiation, giving the possibility of again raising questions such as shorter hours, holidays with pay, etc., had revived in the minds of many delegates ideas that it is possible to get back to the old line of progress by extending the social services and improving industrial conditions on the basis of a continual peaceful evolution (the outlook that crashed in 1931). It is possible that this trend reached its high water mark at Norwich ; this feeling amongst the delegates partially explains the tranquil mood of Congress.

What was this barrier that made the discussion at Congress so sterile ? It was the persistent refusal to face up to the realities of the part being played by the National Government. This issue was sharply raised in the discussions on Spain, Unity and Armaments, but the arguments of the delegates who stressed the anti-democratic, pro-Fascist character of the National Government evoked little response. The reason for this

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refusal to face the realities of the position has been admirably described by Prof. Laski as " the fear of the British Labour leaders that capitalist respect for constitutionalism would not survive a stirring campaign by a united working class that took the political offensive."

This fear is expressed in the thesis of the official movement that " Communism breeds Fascism." Put into plain English, this only means—don't ask for more, or the ruling class will turn nasty and take away what they have already conceded ; in another form, stem the tide of class struggle before it turns into a raging torrent leading to what the conservative official mind can only visualise as chaos and confusion.

The spokesmen of the official line were on the horns of a dilemma. To accept the position that the National Government was a friend of Fascism, was the central controlling force of international reaction, would have shattered the basic foundations of their policy. On the other hand, to answer the delegates who proclaimed the National Government to be a Government of reaction, would have necessitated a defence of the National Government that would have cut clean through the ambiguities of the National Council of Labour's report on " Armaments and Defence."

The nearest approach to a reply on this issue was Sir Walter Citrine's dramatic question : " Does anyone dare to believe that our Government would pledge its military support to a Fascist Power ? " Pose the question in another form and the answer is clear. Does anyone dare to deny that the National Government has given political support to the Fascist Powers ? Does anyone dare to deny that the logical conclusion to political support, should the necessity arise, is military support ? When the Japanese attacked Manchuria Sir John Simon rushed to their defence ; when Italy attacked Abyssinia we had the Hoare-Laval Pact ; when Germany rearmed, Britain again kept the ring clear for them—what was denied to democratic Germany was conceded unhesitatingly to Fascist Germany ; when Italy and Germany invaded Spain once again the British Government played a superficially ambiguous rôle, but basically a decisive pro-Fascist rôle.

The reasons for this policy are obvious. To defend China against Japan would have meant indirect support for a national unification of China and possibly a democratic revolution. To defend Abyssinia would have meant support for the fight for freedom of subject nationalities and colonial peoples against imperialist exploitation. To lend support to the fight of democratic Spain against invasion would have given victory to the forces of the people's revolution against internal reaction and have strengthened the forces fighting for social revolution. To check the Fascist Powers at any stage would mean to risk internal collapse and the possibilities of revolution in Italy, Germany and Japan.

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Faced with this position it is clear that the National Government is preparing to risk to the utmost many of its own imperialist interests in the defence of capitalism as a whole. Therefore, we can dare to answer Sir Walter's question by saying: Yes, the National Government *will* lend military support to the Fascist Powers if it can direct the blows of the Fascist Powers along its own basic line of political strategy, namely, against the Soviet Union, against democratic and social advance throughout the world, against all movements for national and colonial freedom.

We can further say that the National Government will only oppose the aggression of the Fascist Powers if these Powers consider it easier to expand and consolidate their régimes by attacking British Imperialist interests, relying on the National Government to continue making concessions. Therefore the policy of the National Government intensifies the drive to war both in the East and the West.

Sir Walter Citrine stated that we could not risk leaving Britain disarmed until a Labour Government was elected in 1940, and that public opinion would restrain the National Government from supporting Fascism. On the contrary, Sir Walter, given the operation of the policy outlined in " Armaments and Defence," the National Government can " restrain " public opinion and impose Fascism.

Fascism is not something " external " to capitalism. It is monopoly capitalism's most brutal form of defence—and all the forces that operated to give rise to Fascism in Germany are operating now in Britain. Not least of them is the refusal of the Labour Movement to face the unpleasant reality that in arming the National Government we are arming our most bitter enemy.

Lenin's Letters to Maxim Gorky:

The Publication of the Lenin Letters is unavoidably held over to the next issue.

They will appear as usual in the November issue.

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LABOUR AND ARMAMENTS

By M.P.

[*We print the following article as an important expression of leading left wing opinion in the Labour Party on the armaments issue. While agreeing with the writer's trenchant criticism of the policy of abstention on the arms vote as a policy which strengthens the National Government and its reactionary foreign policy, we cannot accept his formulation of the conclusion to be drawn, which, basing itself on the premiss that "there is no longer any collective system," defines the alternatives as "cannon-fodderism or war-resistance." We believe that this is an expression of the tendencies to despair and defeatism among some sections of the left, which can be extremely dangerous and weaken the fight for a positive change of policy in Britain. Further comment on this issue is given in the current Notes of the Month.*—*Editor*, LABOUR MONTHLY.]

THE Right Wing leaders of the Labour Party and of the Trades Unions induced the Parliamentary Party, by a majority of six at a "snap" meeting attended by only just over half of the Party, to abstain instead of voting against the arms credits. They did so by arguing that: (a) Armaments will be needed by a Labour Government in the face of the Fascist menace; (b) Armaments cannot be improvised and soldiers cannot be trained in a day; (c) Labour cannot stand up to Tory propaganda if we demand a strong foreign policy, including arms for Spain, and at the same time vote against arms for this country.

Now every one of these arguments is just as valid against abstention as it is with regard to voting against the arms credits. They are all arguments directed to justifying a vote *for* the Government's arms credits. It is perfectly plain from the speeches of Mr. Bevin and Dr. Dalton at the Edinburgh Conference and since, that "abstention" is only a half-way house, and that those who induced the Parliamentary Party to abstain will not rest until they have made it vote for the Government's "defence" programme. The Tories can be trusted to make them do so, by pointing out that all Labour's official arguments for abstention are really arguments in favour of rearmament, and that therefore "abstention" is simply a cowardly compromise due to Labour's dissensions and confusion of mind.

The Tories put Labour's Right Wing leaders into a debating-point dilemma by accusing them of refusing the arms for defence while demanding a strong foreign policy. The way out of that dilemma was to say that Labour did not mean by "defence" what the Tories mean,

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and that we refuse to support them in the war which the Government's foreign policy is making inevitable—namely a clash of rival Imperialisms. If and when their foreign policy showed any readiness to defend democracy and to re-build the collective system on the only lines possible to-day—namely an " open " bloc of socialist and democratic States in the League, with France, Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. as the steel frame of the bloc—we would reconsider our attitude. But pending that somewhat improbable change in the Government's foreign policy Labour would vote against their arms credits as a warning that it did not propose to support them in fighting for Imperialism.

But instead of taking that straightforward way out of the dilemma, and insisting on a show-down, in the shape of a General Election, between Labour's policy for re-building the collective system and the Government's betrayal and destruction of the League and consequent drift to war, Labour's Right Wing leaders ran away from the Tories' case and took refuge in " abstention." And they did so by the use of arguments that make it certain that the Tories will shortly smoke them out of that funk-hole too, and that they will then try to bolt into voting *for* the Government's " defence " programme. Thereby they will in fact be handing over the workers and the youth of this country to be cannon-fodder for the Tories—not because they think it is right they should be slaughtered, but because they are afraid of opposing the Government on the issue of " national unity " and " defence," on grounds, as the August number of *Labour* has it, " not of principle but of procedure."

For one year these same leaders supported the Government on " non-intervention," not because they thought it was right, but because they were afraid of the Catholic vote and of the Tory charges of war-mongering. For these ignoble reasons they incurred for twelve long months the responsibility of acquiescing in Fascist aggression against Spanish democracy. And now they are doing the same thing on a vaster scale and making themselves accessories before the fact to the war in which the National Government are preparing to butcher the youth of this country. And they are doing so not because they think it is right to back this Imperialist and reactionary Government in any and every war, but—on grounds of electoral tactics ! Compared to the abjectness of this attitude, the dyed-in-the-wool Tory Imperialist who believes in " my country, right or wrong," becomes morally respectable although politically misguided !

But it is not yet too late to save the Labour Party from this supreme betrayal. The resolutions already before the Labour Party Conference in October show that the whole issue of Labour's attitude to the Government's foreign and defence policies must be thrashed out. And the Labour Party will approach that great debate with certain commitments

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and certain facts fresh in its mind. It may be helpful to run through those commitments, to recall those facts, and to ask certain questions.

At the Plymouth Trades Union Congress in September, 1936, the following resolution (No. 36) on resistance to conscription and war was moved by the Shop Assistants Union and unanimously adopted:

> This Annual Congress declares most emphatically that on no account whatever shall the Trade Union Movement assist the Government in its desire for conscription, either in the armed forces or in the industrial field, in the event of war, but will actively resist such attempts.

Since that resolution was adopted Mr. Duff Cooper, while War Minister, has declared that of course there will be military conscription in the next war, just as there was in the last, only this time it will come much quicker. The Government's White Paper rejecting the anti-profiteering and peace-time control proposals of the Royal Commission on the Arms Industry, stated that there would be immediate and complete industrial conscription on the outbreak of war.

The Annual Conference at Bournemouth will have before it 26 Resolutions on War and Peace, nearly all of which demand opposition to the Government's armaments programme and resistance to any form of industrial or military conscription at the hands of this Government. Three of these resolutions—Nos. 20, 21 and 23—call upon the Conference to endorse Resolution No. 36 of last year's T.U. Congress, in order to pledge the Labour Party to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Trades Unions in resisting any and all Tory conscription.

Now what will the Trades Unionists at Bournemouth do when these resolutions come up for discussion? Will they oppose them? If so, they will be opposing the resolution they themselves adopted at Plymouth last year. The prolonged failure of the Executive to act on the decisions of the Edinburgh Conference about Spain has been severely and justly criticised. But it would be a far grosser breach of democracy if the Trades Union leaders at Bournemouth in 1937 went back on the decision to oppose industrial or military conscription by the "National" Government that they unanimously adopted at Plymouth in 1936.

On the other hand, if the Labour Party Conference at Bournemouth endorses the Plymouth T.U. Resolution against conscription, it pledges itself not to support the National Government in war. For the National Government have declared that they will impose both military and industrial conscription the moment this country is at war. That is an obvious necessity, for modern war is and must be "totalitarian"—it cannot be run on the basis of limited liability or individual freedom! What sense is there then in Labour not voting against (or even voting for) the Government's arms credits, while pledging itself to resist conscription by this Government? Or are Messrs. Citrine, Bevin and Dalton going to follow up their work on inducing Labour to abandon

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its opposition to the Government's arms credits by trying to persuade Labour to give this Government a blank cheque to conscript the workers and to do what it likes with the lives of our youth? It is impossible, as Labour has declared over and over again, to acquiesce in the Government's arms programme without acquiescing in their foreign policy, and it is impossible to acquiesce in their foreign policy without committing ourselves in advance to accepting the conscription and war which the Government's policy is making inevitable. How far down that path will Labour suffer itself to be led by our Right Wing leaders—in the name of electoral tactics?

Before suggesting an answer, let us look at some more of Labour's recent official commitments.

In July, 1936, the Parliamentary Party issued the following manifesto on armaments and foreign policy:

> In order to mark its entire opposition to the international policy of the Government, of which the rearmament programme is an integral part, the Labour Party will, on July 27 and 28, vote against the estimates for the fighting services.
>
> A vote against an estimate is not a vote for the abolition of the service concerned, but is a vote in opposition to the policy of which the estimate is the expression.
>
> Labour does not advocate unilateral disarmament. On the contrary it has definitely declared its willingness to provide such defence forces as are required for this country to do its part in a system of collective security through the League of Nations.
>
> But the Government has shown clearly that it cannot be trusted to pursue an honest League policy. It has gone far to destroy the authority of the League of Nations, is ready to do a deal at any time with an aggressor, has never explained how its armaments policy is related to League requirements, supports the vicious system of private interest in arms manufacture, is engaging in an armaments competition which can only lead to war, and has taken no step to call the nations together to deal with the causes of war, especially those economic causes which must be removed if permanent peace is to be attained.
>
> The Labour Party, therefore, opposes this Government and calls upon all those who love peace to do likewise in order to stop the dangerous drift to world disaster.

Since that manifesto was issued, the Government has added the betrayal of Spain to the betrayal of Abyssinia, and begun negotiations with Germany and Italy for a Four-Power Pact that will give a free hand for Fascist aggression against Spain, Czechoslovakia and the U.S.S.R., as well as subjecting France to Fascist-Tory pressure that will encourage reaction in that country to take the offensive against the Popular Front.

In the light of these facts, is the Labour Party to abandon its "entire opposition to the policy of the Government," or abandon its declared view that the Government's rearmament programme is "an integral part" of its foreign policy?

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The truth is that it is impossible to treat Labour's attitude to the Government's arms programme as a mere question of electoral tactics. That is a pretence that deceives nobody. The whole of the Government's policy, domestic and foreign alike, is being justified in terms of the necessities of national defence. The whole of the Government's appeal to the electorate is based on the demand for national unity in face of the international danger.

Labour's Right Wing leaders have in fact accepted this plea for national unity at its face value, or at least are afraid ever to challenge it. They look upon " abstention " on the arms credits as a half-way house to voting for the arms credits. They are not prepared to say " no " to any demands the Government may make for industrial or military conscription, because those demands too would be made in the name of the needs of national defence. In the last analysis they are prepared to support this Government in the Imperialist war that its foreign policy is making inevitable. It is because they believe in " national unity " with the Tories in case of any and every war, not because of electoral tactics, that Labour's Right Wing leaders do not want to vote against the arms credits.

That being the case, it becomes of prime importance to find out just what the Government do mean by " national defence." One thing at any rate is clear—the Government do *not* mean by " defence " any duty to uphold the Covenant against aggression. In China, in Abyssinia, and in Spain they have refused to take the slightest risk of war for the collective system, and they have charged Labour with warmongering for asking them to stand by their treaty obligations. The Government have again and again declared that the Covenant contains no obligation to take any action against an aggressor involving any risk of war, and that they would never accept such obligations except in areas where they had national interests to defend. By this policy of persistent default on our obligations to the collective system they have in fact destroyed the League as an instrument of peace. The Covenant is no longer anything but a scrap of paper. And the Government have no policy for and no intention of re-building the collective system they have smashed.

But perhaps, even if the Government's statement that they want armaments to defend the collective system is untrue, their further statement that they want arms to defend democracy is true? Since this Government came to power Fascism has destroyed democracy over a large part of the world—and always with the open approval and secret assistance of a large part of the Government's supporters and of the vested interests they represent. The Government's own international policy has invariably been for Fascism and Imperialism and against every oppressed people and appressed class. Spain is only the latest of a long series of examples, although to date the most flagrant case.

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But perhaps, even if the Government will never take up arms to defend democracy abroad, any more than it will ever take any risk of war for the Covenant, it will at least defend democracy at home against Fascism. This raises the question—do the National Government mean by democracy what the Labour Party means? Labour in its report on Parliamentary Problems and Procedure adopted at Southport in 1934, declared that democracy meant that it was the duty of a Labour Government to carry out the programme for which they received a mandate at the polls; and that for this purpose they must (a) Reform the procedure of the House of Commons so as greatly to speed up legislation (b) Abolish the House of Lords within their five years of office, and in any case at the first moment it obstructed any measure to which the Labour Government attached importance (c) Take any emergency powers necessary to overcome any extra-Parliamentary obstruction of Labour's policy.

Before the Labour Party decides to back the Government in a war for democracy let us ascertain whether the Tories agree with Labour's view of democracy. For all the evidence indicates that they do not. At the 1935 election the Government's supporters, including Cabinet Ministers, kept on saying that the return of the National Government to power was the only way of preserving democracy in this country, and that a victory for Labour would mean a "return to party politics" that would spell the end of democracy. Mr. Runciman showed what that meant by threatening to start a run on the banks if Labour won the election. The capitalist coalition that calls itself the "National" Government makes the Fascist claim of representing "national unity" and "standing above party." Its supporters virtually threaten to sabotage democracy if the electorate puts Labour into office. They denounce Labour's proposals for reforming Parliament as red revolution. The moment war came this Government would become "totalitarian" and hold the whole country in the iron grip of industrial and military censorship and war propaganda. After that, win, lose or draw the war, the working class would be under the heel of Fascism and the only way out would be through revolution.

If, then, the Government are not arming to defend the collective system or to defend democracy, either at home or abroad, perhaps they are arming to defend the United Kingdom from invasion. But not since William the Conqueror has this country been involved in war because an enemy wanted to molest the United Kingdom. Ever since that remote date all our wars have been fought on issues outside our shores—generally the Balance of Power and Imperialism. Neither Germany, Italy, nor Japan wants anything from this island. What they all do want is chunks of the far-flung British Empire. That fact is perfectly realised by the Government. For purposes of propaganda they talk as though what they meant by "defence" was repelling an

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unprovoked invasion of these shores. But the defence White Paper of March, 1936, says that:

> It should be emphasised that in questions of defence our situation is different from that of most other great nations. Their forces can, without risk, be concentrated in limited areas near their own shores. Our world-wide responsibilities render this impossible.... It is essential, therefore, that the relation of our own armed forces to those of other Great Powers should be maintained at a figure which will be high enough to enable us to exercise the influence and authority in international affairs which are . . . .required for the defence of vital British interests.

The navy is to maintain "free passage between the different parts of the Empire of troops and supplies of all kinds." The army is not only for home defence but also for garrisoning different parts of the Empire and is "in time of emergency or war to provide a properly equipped force ready to proceed overseas wherever it may be wanted." As for the air force, its "prime function . . . . is to provide an effective deterrent to any attack upon the vital interests of this country, whether situated at home or overseas."

On February 18, 1937, Lord (then Mr.) Baldwin made a speech in the House quoting a statement by Mr. Eden which he said expressed the views of the Government on defence very fairly and clearly. The Government wanted arms, he said, "in our own defence, and in defence of the territories of the British Commonwealth of Nations." They would also be used in pursuance of "our Treaty of Alliance with Iraq and our projected Treaty with Egypt," and "in the defence of France and Belgium against unprovoked aggression."

That is what the Government are arming for. They are preparing to fight single-handed, or at the best with the aid of France, against all three Fascist aggressors, in order to retain the vast possessions of the British Empire and to enforce the Tory view of Imperial interests—which roughly coincides with the City and F.B.I. view of their own interests—against all comers.

That is the defence policy that the Government expect Labour to support. These are some of Labour's official statements on that policy.

The Rt. Hon. C. R. Attlee, House of Commons, June, 23, 1936:

> I say quite frankly that the Government have killed the League; the League may go on as a debating society, but the Government have killed it . . . . The Government have refused to take risks for peace, although that was their professed policy and their aim, and they have increased the risk of war. The result is that they have put this country in a dangerous position . . . . This country's position is not what it was in pre-1914 days. It is not in the position in which it had an island stronghold here and a far-flung Empire. It now has its very heart connected with the Continent by the air. There is no security in isolation. The alternatives to isolation are alliances or collective security. The indictment against the Government is that when they had the

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> opportunity of uniting Europe and forming a real front for collective security, they threw it away, and when they had the chance of uniting all the people in this country behind that policy, they threw it away. That opportunity is not going to recur. To-day the British Empire holds its possessions in the Far East on the good-will of Japan ; we hold the route to India on the good-will of Italy. These armaments which the Government are asking us to give them are being piled up so that we shall be strong enough to meet all these enemies. That way lies ruin and war.

All this is true. But it is hardly an argument for not voting against the arms credits !

A few days before, on June 18, 1936, Mr. Attlee said in the House :

> We know now that we cannot trust a National Government so-called, a Conservative Government, to stand by the League. They have no principles. All they ask is for arms and arms and arms, and yet the Prime Minister says he is afraid that no one will be able to use them. He will not get anyone to use them, for the Government is not piling up arms for peace, but is leading this country back to the blood-stained tragedy of 1914.

True again. But why, if this is true, help the Government to pile up arms !

The Rt. Hon. A. V. Alexander said in the House on July 20, 1936 :

> I should say from the experience we have had of this Government in the last five years, that the less faith is placed in them the better it will be for the country. . . . Collective security, to which lip service is still given, is a thing of the past with the Government. . . .
>
> Even with armaments at double the strength we are being asked for to-night, unless the Government work through the League and for collective security they must know or they ought to know perfectly well that they cannot defend the British Empire. . . . There is not in this country a decent supporter of the League of Nations who will ever honestly trust that Government again. There is not one of the small nations in Europe who will trust them again.

But is Labour now to trust the Government on arms credits ?

On March 11, 1937, the Rt. Hon. A. V. Alexander, commenting on the Government's Navy estimates, observed that the Government's naval defence policy made no reference at all to collective security, but " was a plan for building a British Navy capable of defending the whole of the British Empire and its sea routes, and operating of itself in both hemispheres. Along that road lies the beginning of the end of the British Empire. Along that road lies the approach to national madness and national suicide."

All true. But then why not vote against the Credits for this policy of madness and suicide ?

On March 15, 1937, Mr. F. Montague said in the House : " Do the Government believe that the manhood of this country will throw itself into another war of unnameable horrors for the continued possession of

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mandates in Africa, for Togoland for instance? If they do, they must be mad."

True again. But why should Labour encourage this madness by not voting against the credits that are part of the Government's preparations for their "war of unnameable horrors for the continued possession of mandates?"

The Parliamentary Party's "Call to the Nation" on "The Great Betrayal" of June 18, 1936, contained the following passages:

> The British Government has scrapped the solemn pledges given to the people, before during, and after the last General Election. . . .
>
> The Government is advocating the limitation of the functions of the League, and the withdrawal of Britain from all responsibility for the maintenance of peace outside certain narrow areas in which it says this country has special interests.
>
> The adoption of such a disastrous policy will be to encourage the breaking of treaties, and new acts of aggression, to set free lawless forces, and to revert to the discredited policy of the balance of power.
>
> The League of Nations will be reduced to an empty sham, and hope of the peoples of the world for a new and secure international order and a reign of peace will be shamelessly betrayed. Millions will be doomed to death, and civilisation to utter and final destruction.

Since that was written the National Government well and truly consummated the betrayal of Abyssinia and the destruction of the collective system, and added the betrayal of Spanish democracy for good measure. The truth of the Parliamentary Party's call to the nation has been proved to the hilt. Are the Labour Party now going to help doom civilisation to "utter and final destruction" because they dare not say "no" to the Government on national defence?

The Government have been utterly callous and ruthless in their refusal to take any risk of war for the defence of democracy or of the collective system. They have not scrupled to accuse Labour of "wanting war" because we said it was this country's duty to take that risk. As a result they have created a situation where there is no longer any collective system. Thereby they compel Labour to choose between being cannon-fodder for confidence tricksters and war resistance. The former course means the ultimate betrayal of the workers and the youth of this country. It means that our Right Wing Labour leaders, all of whom are too old to fight, and half of whom (including Mr. Bevin and Sir Walter Citrine) served on the home front when of military age in the last war, are ready to line up with the Government to conscript the workers and compel our youngsters to be butchered in an Imperialist war which our leaders have themselves declared will mean the "utter and final destruction of civilisation."

The second course means that Labour has the courage to declare: "The Government have destroyed the collective system by refusing to

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take any risk in its defence, and have thereby violated their election pledges and made war inevitable failing a restoration of the collective system. But they have no policy for doing that. On the contrary, they are now preparing to fight single-handed in defence of the whole Empire against all three Fascist powers. At the same time they have done and are doing all they can, on class-war grounds, to encourage and strengthen those powers. Labour refuses to support a war in which Fascism will win, whichever side loses. We will not fight for Imperialism. The Empire cannot be defended except as part of the collective defence of a group of states, including the U.S.S.R., and based on the Covenant. Labour has a policy for building such a group. The Government have none. Therefore the Government must resign in order to give the British people a chance to decide at the polls what foreign policy they want. And Labour will compel the Government to resign by voting against its arms credits and refusing to support it in any war. A Government that violates its election pledges on the issue of peace forfeits the right to support in war. It has abused its mandate from the people. Therefore it must go."

If Labour throws down that challenge the road to unity and victory will be open.

In conclusion, let us quote Mr. Attlee's prophetic words at the Brighton Conference in 1935 :

> I do not think we are so weak and so foolish that we are going to be made tools of by this Government and led up the garden path of Imperialism again. If we do we shall deserve our fate.

Is Mr. Attlee going to follow in the footsteps of Mr. MacDonald and interpret democracy as meaning that he must always side with the majority however wrong he may think they are ? Or will he have the courage to stick to what he believes is right, even at the cost of being temporarily in the minority ? Whether or not we are to support the Government in their Gadarene rush to war is not a matter of counting noses. It is a question of conscience. It is to be hoped that whatever those who are too old to fight may say, the younger generation in the Labour Movement will flatly declare that they have a conscientious objection to fighting in any nationalist or Imperialist war, and therefore will refuse to fight at all except for a Government with an honest policy for re-building the collective system. That means refusing to fight for the National Government. That is the real issue underlying the question of Labour's attitude to the arms credits—cannon-fodderism or war-resistance. The bad faith of the Government has forced that issue upon us. Now it has been raised it is Labour's duty to give a clear and resolute answer. And on this issue the young can lead.

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INTERNATIONAL CONSEQUENCES OF REARMAMENT

By JOHN KNIGHT

[This is the fifth and concluding article of a series on the Economics of Rearmament which has been appearing in the Labour Monthly since the June issue.]

REARMAMENT quite obviously is one of the most serious of all contagious diseases. If one of the Great Powers starts to arm at an accelerated pace, all the others will follow suit pretty soon. For, as long as capitalism rules the world, or as at present five-sixths of the world, there is always danger of war. If under such conditions one country speeds up its armament production all the others tend to follow in its wake because they are afraid of being otherwise relegated to an inferior position, of becoming more liable to attack, or of being less likely to share in the spoils of a victorious aggressive war which they may join.

From this it is obvious that all the disastrous consequences of rearmament, such as the deterioration of labour conditions in certain respects, the increasing distortion of the whole capitalist economic structure, certain financial difficulties, etc., which we can observe in Great Britain to-day, are repeated in almost every other country—are reproduced in fact on an international scale. In the 7th Annual Report of the Bank of International Settlements, Basle, 1937, we read :

> Whatever may be said for a policy of public works in times of depression, there can be no question about the undesirability of increased government outlay once the expansion of business is in full swing, for then there is the danger that the extra stimulus may produce an unhealthy boom. From this point of view the present rise in armaments expenditure is to be deplored. Let it be said in passing that in the Anglo-Saxon countries as well as in most of the smaller countries of Europe, expenditure on armaments began to rise substantially only in the course of 1936 and that up to then this expenditure had relatively little to do with the increase in production in those countries.
>
> Now, however, their expenditure for armaments has been increased to a higher level than ever before in peace-time. Considering the phase that has been reached in the business cycle, this increase comes at the wrong time ; and it tends to stimulate the wrong trade, *i.e.*, those that are already benefiting most from the general recovery in business. It has been calculated that for the world as a whole the level of armaments expenditure in 1936 was, on a gold basis, three times as high as in 1913 and more than twice as high as in the years 1924-30. Moreover, the

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> amount of money involved in the orders placed for armaments in 1936 was in many countries in excess of the current armaments expenditure in that year, and it is the placing of orders which primarily affects business arrangements.

It is characteristic that the greatest international banking concern does not regret the vastness of the armaments expenditure ; it only regrets that this expenditure is made at the " wrong time," that is to say, in a period when business is increasing anyway, instead of saving it for the next depression. But the interesting thing is that the bank recognises quite clearly the increasing anarchy which the rearmament programmes of the different countries are preparing. Never before has there been a period of increasing business in any country so assiduous in preparing the next crisis, and, moreover, dooming so many sections of industry to a depression during the upswing itself—note, for instance, the decline in building activity in Great Britain during 1937, the generally low level of consumption goods production in Germany, etc.

But rearmament in one country not only leads to a duplication of the same process and all its pernicious consequences in all other capitalist countries. In addition, it brings in its train a great number of economic difficulties in purely international spheres such as foreign trade, colonial exploitation, etc. The report of the Bank of International Settlements, quoted above, sees only one side of the picture, when it continues :

> One of the results of the armaments expenditure is that the attention of producers is concentrated on the home markets and they therefore become less interested in export business. For the countries which are arming this certainly constitutes a grave disadvantage, but such is the irony of circumstances that this situation, although it is a consequence of armaments, may ease the tension of international competition ; when manufacturers are fully occupied they are less concerned about the shifting of trade to other countries and are more willing to share contracts in foreign markets with producers who would normally be their strongest competitors.

It is quite true that because of the enormous profits which armament orders bring many firms who produce armaments are less interested to-day in exports of non-armament products. But exports are only one side of foreign trade. The other side of foreign trade is represented by imports, and while export rivalries may perhaps have become less intense during the last two years, import rivalries have increased immensely. For most of the Great Powers have to import considerable quantities of raw materials for armament production.

The fight for Swedish iron ore between Germany and Great Britain is one of the major economic battles being fought at present. It was Hitler who said that Germany wants Franco to be victorious in order to secure a steady flow of Spanish iron ore and mercury to Germany. The new war of aggression by Japan against China is a war for raw materials following on the disappointing economic results of the annexation of

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Manchuria. It was the hope of securing large quantities of raw materials which induced Mussolini to rape Abyssinia. *The lessening of the tension of export rivalry among the great industrial countries is far more than offset by the enormous increase in the import rivalry which not only leads to a steep increase in the intensity of competition but which already has led in recent years to several wars and may lead to others ending in another world war.*

Thus while all Great Powers fight for higher imports, their relative strength is extraordinarily uneven. Great Britain, for instance, is at present still strong enough financially to pay with innumerable services (shipping, etc.), incoming interest from foreign investments, etc., for the surplus of imports over exports. But other countries are not in so favourable a position. Consequently, these other countries are obliged to enforce a strict economy in foreign exchange which leads to new trade and foreign exchange restrictions or at least to maintaining the restrictions imposed during the last crisis. While as far as the total volume of industrial production is concerned, the last cyclical crisis has been overcome, the foreign exchange situation and the whole systen of foreign trade restrictions still bear all the marks of the last crisis, and in some cases have even suffered fresh wounds. Rearmament has thus meant a continuation of the foreign exchange and foreign trade crisis up to this very moment, when industrial production in most countries is reaching new high peaks.

While the development of exports and imports has been somewhat contradictory as a consequence of the immense profits made by the armament racketeers resulting in a relative slackening of export activity on the one hand and of the rapid increase of raw material demands for the armament industry resulting in most intense import activity on the other hand—another contradiction can be observed in the pressure to increase imports coupled with the incessant efforts towards raw material self-sufficiency. Germany, Italy and other countries, are trying to replace imports by home production, even if the home products are of inferior quality and considerably more expensive. For this trend towards self-sufficiency is, in the eyes of its propagandists, nothing else than a temporary makeshift. The country must be made as self-sufficing as possible in order to enable her to stand a long war without being hurt too much through a possible blockade. After the war " which, of course, will be victorious," the country will have enough raw materials to be able to return to the production of higher quality and cheaper goods again. In this way international rearmament leads to a general lowering of the quality of production, to a general increase in the costs of production, to retrogression in industrial technique, to barbarism in industry.

At the same time we observe a much more rapid industrialisation of numerous agricultural countries or chiefly raw material producing countries such as the Balkans, some South American States, Australia, etc. This rapid increase in industrialisation is caused by the desire of these countries

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to start armament production of their own or to profit from a war by delivering war goods to the fighting countries. This tendency, observed already before but never to such a degree, leads to a shrinkage in the world market of the great industrial powers, and must, when armament orders no longer feed their industry enough, lead to a considerable aggravation of the foreign trade crisis during the ensuing depression.

The intense rearmament thus partly helps to keep open the wounds which the last crisis inflicted on foreign trade and foreign exchange; partly it leads to intense aggravation of international tension—Japan-Manchuria; Japan-North China; Italy-Abyssinia; Italy, Germany-Spain; it prepares, too, the ground for the next cyclical crisis much more effectively than did the last period of increasing business activity, 1923 *to* 1929.

Some figures may illustrate the development of the international economic situation under the influence of international rearmament.

*The Development of World Production**

Branch	1932	1936
Total Production	100	135
Industrial Production	100	161
Metal Production	100	222
Nickel Production	100	432

Total world production, industrial as well as agricultural, has increased since the crisis year 1932 by 35 per cent. Industrial production which excludes the purely civilian agricultural production, has increased by 61 per cent. Metal production, which is much closer to armament production than industrial production as a whole, has increased by 122 per cent. But the production of nickel which to-day is used to a greater extent than any other important metal for armaments, has increased by 332 per cent., or almost ten times as much as total world production.

The disastrous deformation and distortion of production is quite obvious from this table. While armament production has increased immensely and is swallowing up more and more the productive forces of society the general level of production has relatively lagged behind, and compared with the last pre-crisis year, *i.e.*, with 1929, it can be said that civilian production to-day has declined absolutely while military production has increased considerably.

Another feature of the general distortion of world economy is the continued depression of world trade:

World Production and World Trade†

Year	World Production	World Trade
1929	100	100
1932	80	75
1936	108	86

*Based on Statistics in the Trade Supplement of *The Economist* and in *The League of Nations' Statistical Year Book*. Figures refer to the volume of production.

†Based on statistics in the Trade Supplement of *The Economist* and in *The League of Nations' Statistical Year Book*. Figures refer to the volume of production and trade.

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World trade since 1932 has not increased half as much as world production—the foreign trade depression continues. But this does not mean that all branches of foreign trade are depressed :

World Trade (Exports)*

Year	Total	Armaments
1932	100	100
1936	128	165

While foreign trade as a whole is still relatively depressed, the trade in armaments has increased very considerably.

No matter what branch of world economy we look at—trade, production, etc.—we find that armament activity is gaining rapidly while the other branches are either depressed or show an upswing which is very small, and which in almost all cases has been too insignificant to raise the level of business back to that reached before the last crisis. The level of world consumption goods production is to-day undoubtedly considerably lower than in 1929, while the level of world destruction goods production has reached unprecedented heights.

*Based on same sources as above table and on computations of the Berlin Institute of Business Research. Figures refer to the value of exports.

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"NEW ZEALAND'S FIRST LABOUR GOVERNMENT"

[*With reference to C. G. Watson's article under the above title in the June* LABOUR MONTHLY, *we have received the following letter from the New Zealand Communist Party criticising and correcting certain of the points in the article.*]

IN the June issue of the LABOUR MONTHLY appears an article by Comrade Gordon Watson, entitled "New Zealand's First Labour Government." The first part of the article provides an excellent summary of the background to the Labour Government's Election victory. The second part which deals with the trend of events subsequent to that victory, contains an analysis which is contrary, in many respects, to the line of the Party. In view of the possibility of this article being taken as being an official statement, it is necessary to explain where it differs from the views of the Communist Party.

In the first place, Comrade Watson's article gives an exaggerated impression of an era of industrial struggle setting in with the advent of the Labour Government. Without these struggles, Comrade Watson infers the promises of the Labour Government, including the 40 hour week, would not have been fulfilled. While working-class pressure undoubtedly helped the Government, this suggestion is an unsupported hypothesis, both niggardly and incorrect. (This attitude, it is true, is consistent with the mistaken attempt made last year to whip up a 40 hour week campaign at a time when the Government had had no possible chance to introduce it). It is a fact that the Communist Party objects to the Arbitration Court being given the power to decide in which industries the 40 hour week should be operative, but it is also true that despite the "flare up of strikes and demonstrations" spoken of by Comrade Watson, the Court *is* still the arbiter. The 40 hour week is fairly general and (despite the alleged forcing of Mr. Armstrong's hand as instanced in his statement of September, 1936, "only three months after the passing of the Act,") has been gained within the terms of the existing legislation.

The point is not that the existing legislation is satisfactory—it is not—but that the improvements in the conditions of the workers cannot simply be put down to post-election strikes and demonstrations, plus the higher price of wool but to the fact that the Government fulfilled in reasonably quick time some of the promises they had been elected to fulfil. The freezing works strike, it is true, provides an instance of partially successful pressure upon the Government, but we must refrain from representing the Labour Government as one which after election immediately turned tail upon its promises and had to be forced onward by a mass wave of strikes and demonstrations.

In point of fact, there has *not been one strike of dimensions comparable with the great struggles* under previous Governments. We have experienced brief, almost incipient, strikes ending generally with the Government promising to see that the complaints will be considered, providing they return to work.

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Comrade Watson's article provides an exaggerated impression of the degree of industrial upheaval.

But the worst mistake in Comrade Watson's article lies in his analysis of the development of trade union unity culminating in the formation of the Federation of Labour. An attempt is made to represent the situation which existed prior to the unity Conference, as being a " faction fight." To explain a great movement for industrial unity and industrial democracy in terms of clashes of personalities is to vulgarise history. The truth is that Walsh and Glover happened to represent, to be the nominal leaders of, a movement of the industrial workers towards *unity with democracy*, within the trade union movement. The Alliance of Labour and the Trades and Labour Council—within these two organisations a stirring was felt amongst the rank and file particularly. The smaller and weaker unions felt this even more strongly than the powerful national organisations. But they feared the loss of their independence within a national council or alliance. They would not be dominated by one or two union chiefs. This desire for a measure of local autonomy was reflected to some extent within branches of the big national unions. It was this desire on the part of the craft unions to maintain their independence, together with the growing sentiment for unity and unity of a democratic and progressive nature, which formed the background of the pre-Conference situation.

Roberts (Watersiders Federation) Cook (N.Z. Workers' Union) an extremely autocratically controlled union and McIlvride (N.Z. Railways Union)—with Roberts in the lead, did not feel themselves in sympathy with this new situation. In the *name* of " pure " industrial unionism and various other arguments, Roberts represented in practice an opposition to unity on a democratic basis.

His attitude in walking out of the Alliance of Labour Conference in 1936 when the vote went the wrong way, was followed by subsequent actions of a like nature. He acted similarly at an attempt made to patch up differences and consider the preliminaries of a national unity conference.

Whatever the actions and personalities of the Alliance and Trades and Labour Council leaders in the past, in this matter they were on the right side and Roberts in the wrong. And again it must be emphasised that this was no formal difference, no personal clash, but a clash between the mass of workers aspiring for unity on a basis of democracy and reasonable local autonomy as against a national organisation controlled by a central junta, with a card vote system and the other organisational forms which go with centralised control.

The rôle of the Miners' Federation in the attainment of unity was exaggerated by Comrade Watson for the reason that he under-estimated the overwhelming strength of the support for the Alliance of Labour and the Trades and Labour Councils and regarded the dispute between the two " sections " as a mere faction fight. *The attitude of the Miners' National Council under Angus McLagan was in no way decisive.* On its own merits it settled nothing for it left the relative position the same. Had McLagan's threat that the Miners would call a Conference been carried out, there would have been greater confusion than ever.

The only tactic practicable under the circumstances was that adopted by the Party plus the overwhelming majority of workers, namely, to isolate the disruptive section under Roberts. Were pressure to be exercised against these minority elements, there was a chance of them submitting. This is precisely what happened. The great representative meetings held in all centres made Roberts and Cook realise that " the game was up," particularly as there

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was dissatisfaction even amongst their own supporters. The railwaymen for instance in several centres passed resolutions favouring the Alliance and Trades and Labour Council, despite the action of McIlvride, Secretary of the N.U.R., in signing with Roberts and Cook, the rival Conference appeal.

The Federation of Labour which came into being, was practically on the basis of the suggestions of the Alliance and the Trades and Labour Council and was contrary to the ideas for which Roberts had stood out. It was formed along the realistic, elastic and democratic lines necessary if unity were to be achieved amongst the mixed types of unions existing.

It is also necessary to point out that the Communist Party of New Zealand was not formed in 1928, but was formed in the early part of 1921 and many important struggles took place within the party during these early years of its existence.

We have no desire to exaggerate these errors or condemn Comrade Watson harshly, but in view of the fact that the articles in the LABOUR MONTHLY and in *Imprecor* will be looked on as virtually official statements, it is necessary to point out the true position.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Soviet Geography. N. Mikhaylov. (Methuen and Co.) 10s. 6d. 229 pp.

The Forty-Hour Week. Michael Stewart. (New Fabian Research Bureau.) 6d. 35 pp.

The Challenge of the North West Frontier. C. F. Andrews. (Allen and Unwin.) 6s. cloth, 3s. 6d. paper. 208 pp.

New Fashions in Wage Theory. J. Kuczynski. (Lawrence and Wishart Ltd.) 3s. 6d. 99 pp.

The Spirit and Structure of German Fascism. Robert A. Brady. (Gollancz.) 12s. 6d. 383 pp. (Left Book Club Choice, 2s. 6d.)

Les Variations du Movement Saisonnier Dans L'Industrie de la Construction. Horst Mendershausen. (Georg and Cie S. A. Libraries, Geneva.) 209 pp.

Nationalism. 4d. 40 pp. *The Religion of Jesus*. 8d. 90 pp. *Why the Village Movement?* 1s. 90 pp. J. C. Kumarappa. *The Constitutions of the World*. Dr. B. Pattabhisitaramaygo. 2s. 110 pp. (Hindustan Publishing Co., Rajamundry, South India.)

Antonia. A Novel of Soviet Russia. Yuri Herman. (Routledge.) 8s. 6d. 470 pp.

Elysian Fields. A Dialogue. Salvador de Madariaga. (Allen and Unwin.) 3s. 6d. 110 pp.

Out of My Life and Work. Auguste Forel. (Allen and Unwin.) 16s. 352 pp.

The Papacy and Fascism. F. A. Ridley. (Secker and Warburg.) 6s. 264 pp.

The Rationalisation and Conservation of the Timber Resources of the World. Dr. A. H. Unwin. (Technical Press Ltd.) 2s. 6d. 48 pp.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Lenin's Selected Works. Volume VIII. (Lawrence and Wishart.) 5s.

WITH the exception of Part IV, which deals with the Party Programme, this volume is devoted entirely to Lenin's speeches and writings on the practical tasks before the Workers' Republic during the dark and difficult period of 1919-20, when the masses were at grips with famine, counter-revolution and intervention. Now, with the approaching 20th anniversary of the Revolution, which marks the final victory of Socialism in the Soviet Union, this volume possesses a special significance: it explains how this great historical victory was achieved. It contains, moreover, much profound wisdom and shrewd common sense that can be usefully applied to the present problems of the international labour movement.

Lenin's dominating theme is the necessity for the unity of the workers. Every speech and article throbs with confidence in the creative power of the masses. Writing to the workers of Petrograd during the worst days of the famine Lenin called for a "mass crusade of advanced workers. . . . We need ten times more iron detachments of the proletariat, enlightened and unreservedly devoted to communism. Then we shall triumph over hunger and unemployment." Lenin wrote thus because the food shortage was largely the work of the bourgeoisie and the kulaks, and could be overcome by a mighty mass movement. At stake was the Revolution, the fight for bread was the fight for Socialism and only the solidarity of the masses could win that fight.

Lenin utters the same thought when dealing with other forms of what he calls capitalism's "painful resistance" to Socialism. "Our first slogan," he declares, "is centralisation, and our second slogan is the unity of the workers. Workers unite and unite again." Reporting to the Eighth Party Congress on the tasks of Soviet industry Lenin again declared "we at first regarded these difficulties in an entirely abstract way, like revolutionaries who preached but absolutely did not know how to set about the matter. No, our decision could be born only from the experiences of the masses."

Fired with this intrepid confidence Lenin was able to seize on the historical meaning of the Subotniks (voluntary forms of labour) as expressing the gathering Socialist consciousness of the workers and the great strength of the Soviet Government. He greeted the Subotniks with great enthusiasm and in the same spirit fostered the Plan for the Electrification of Russia.

It is well known that he regarded electrification as a condition for the final victory of Socialism. But the article, *A Single Economic Plan*, published in the *Pravda* in 1921, is chiefly devoted to a downright attack on the "bureaucratic and intellectual maladies of our apparatus," and a strong defence of expert knowledge. Communist conceit gets short shrift and the numbers of the Party occupying administrative posts are warned to be on their guard "against a passion for bossing."

In his report of the Ninth Party Congress Lenin made a full historical and theoretical statement on the rôle of bourgeois specialists and based his conclusions on the two basic premises that the state itself must not be confused with administration, "and the fact that a given class is the advanced class does not make it immediately capable of governing." Therefore:

> We must safeguard the constitution won by the revolution, but for purposes of administration and the organisation of the state we need people who are acquainted

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> with the art of government, and who have state and business experience, and we can obtain such people only from among the members of the former class.

Lenin's writings are full of sound advice of this kind ; common sense which arises from deep knowledge. That is why these volumes contain so much that is helpful in solving the problems of to-day. For example, reading his speech on the situation caused by the resumption of the war by Poland in 1920, one's mind flies immediately to Spain and the tactics of the Communist Party there. Apply these words of Lenin to Spain to-day :

> If matters have reached the stage of war, everything must be subordinated to the interests of war, the whole internal life of the country must be subordinated to the prosecution of war . . . we must remember that the least neglect, the least lack of attention may frequently involve the unnecessary death of tens of thousands of our best comrades. . . . And so, once more—everything for the War !

With the defeat of Poland and the rout of Wrangel, Lenin again called for a transition to the " labour front," and we find his report to the Eighth Congress of Soviets at the end of 1920 largely devoted to economic questions. Analysing relations with Great Britain and the negotiations for the conclusions of a trade agreement, Lenin refers to the Councils of Action and states that " it appears that in the British Trade Union Movement the pressure of the toiling masses has become strong enough to blunt the edge of the military policy of the imperialists."

Lenin's clear analysis of the inter-imperialist contradictions and the decisive effect of the sympathy for Russia shown by the masses in capitalist countries is one of the outstanding features of this volume. We who took part in the " Hands off Russia " movement get a better understanding of what that work meant, a glimpse, as it were, of the complete picture : the workers' struggle in Britain and the great figure of Lenin calculating with scientific accuracy what this meant in ensuring the victory of Socialism in the first Workers' Republic.

Explaining to the Seventh Congress of Soviets in 1919 the reason for the failure of the first stage of intervention Lenin pointed out that the troops of the Entente " proved unfit for a war against revolutionary Soviet Russia. That, comrades, has always been our chief and fundamental argument. We declared from the very beginning of the revolution that we were a party of the international proletariat, and that, no matter how great the difficulties of revolution were, a time would come when at the most critical moment the sympathy and solidarity of the workers oppressed by international imperialism would make themselves felt."

The volume concludes with Lenin's speeches during 1918 and 1919 on the revision of the programme and name of the Party. The period was hardly a propitious one for a task of such theoretical magnitude, but Lenin was anxious immediately to draw out the theoretical lessons of the practical experiences of the war, revolution and counter revolution in order to equip the Party for the mighty tasks before it. In this connection his controversy with Bucharin is very instructive. Lenin was at pains to correct Bucharin's " bookish exposition of finance capital," the idea of a pure imperialism that had overcome the contradictions of capitalism. Lenin, however, insisted that underneath imperialism " there exists a vast subsoil of the old capitalism," and that the contradictions of imperialism made possible the victory of Socialism in one country.

Bucharin, like Trotsky, has now become a counter-revolutionary. His incorrect theoretical views and consequent disbelief in Socialist construction led him finally into the camp of the wreckers and traitors. Bucharin and his

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fellow conspirators would, however, not have been crushed to-day had it not been for the theoretical blows struck by Lenin against them in 1918 and 1919. Lenin equipped the Party with the correct theory and enabled it to root out the rotten policies and false leaders, and to find in practice the path that has led to the Socialist triumphs about to be celebrated.

WILLIAM RUST.

MATHEMATICS.

Men of Mathematics. By Prof. E. T. Bell. (Gollancz.) 12s. 6d.

THIS book sets out to be a story of the lives of mathematicians over the last 200 years, not a *history* of mathematics. But in spite of its author's intentions it becomes in fact a history, and perhaps inevitably suggests the " great man " explanation of this history.

If we discount this bias there is much of tremendous interest in the story which unfolds. How few of the great mathematicians have lived up to the popular idea of the scientific recluse ? Most of them were buffeted about in the social storms of their epoch, and some took an active part in these struggles. Even the absent-minded Newton, according to Bell,

> Grew up with a fierce hatred of tyranny, subterfuge, and oppression, and when King James later sought to meddle repressively in University affairs, the mathematician and natural philosopher did not need to learn that resolution and a united front on the part of those whose liberties are endangered is the most effective defence against a coalition of unscrupulous politicians. (p. 114.)

Of course not all mathematicians have been on the Left, although, according to Bell, there has been a tendency in this direction. Some have held the most reactionary views, both political and philosophical, which are typified in the galaxy of idealist-tinged *obiterdicta* which preface the book. As a contrast, how refreshing is the materialist spirit in the following declaration of Fourier, the great mathematician of the French Revolution :*

> The profound study of nature is the most fecund source of mathematical discoveries. Not only does this study, by offering a definite goal to research, have the advantage of excluding vague questions and futile calculations, but it is also a sure means of moulding analysis itself and discovering those elements in it which it is essential to know and which science ought always to conserve. These fundamental elements are those which recur in all natural phenomena. (p. 596.)

In the French Revolution we can clearly trace the liberating effect of a great political upheaval on human thought. This was the time, according to Hegel, when the world was stood upon its head, when " the reasoning intellect was applied to everything as the sole reason." (Engels in *Anti-Duhring*.)

It was certainly a time of the most splendid efflorescence of French mathematics. Fourier and the Convention were responsible for an important reform in the teaching of French mathematics.

> Remembering the deadly lectures of defunct professors, memorised and delivered in identical fury year after dreary year, the Convention called in *creators* of mathematics to do the *teaching*, and forbade them to lecture from any notes at all. The lectures were to be delivered standing (not sitting half asleep behind a desk), and were to be a free interchange of questions and explanations between the professor and his class. It was up to the lecturer to prevent a session from degenerating into a profitless debate. (p. 223.)

*Not to be confused with Charles Fourier, the Utopian Socialist pioneer of the same period.

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If only some modern University departments would revive this method !

Perhaps it is not altogether fanciful to see in the England of the 17th century a like stimulating influence of revolutionary storms on creative mathematics. And something of the same sort may be found in the " Stum-und-Dray " period of German history before 1848.

However this may be, such things have to be read between the lines in this book, for its author is not concerned with mathematics as " a mirror of civilisation " (to use Hogben's phrase), but only as an activity of mathematicians. This is one of the fundamental limitations of the book, as already stated.

Another limitation comes from the very character of the advanced mathematics with which it mainly deals. While Hogben's " Mathematics for the Million " is easily accessible to the general reader, and it is even possible to learn mathematics from it, the same cannot be said about this book. Critics have complained that Hogben's book deals only with mathematics before 1750. That is probably one of its great merits.

For in spite of a disarming introduction in which Bell informs us that " the basic ideas of modern mathematics, from which the whole vast and intricate complexity has been woven by thousands of workers, are simple, of boundless scope, and well within the understanding of any human being with normal intelligence " (p. 19), it must be stated that the general reader is not likely to see the *why* and *wherefore* of these ideas. There is a danger that the book will merely produce a state of " gaping wonderment," during which the reader is too stunned by unfamiliar words to realise that he is not following the argument. If this " stunning " danger can be averted the book is likely to stimulate those who have time to take a real look at modern mathematics.

The book ends, apropriately enough, with a chapter on the " Crisis " in mathematics, and the struggle that is going on between different schools over the " foundations " of the subject to-day.

The row began in a fight over the theory of the Infinite which Cantor had pioneered, despite fierce attacks by the mathematicians of his day, to a recognised place in the late 19th century world of mathematics. Right from the start, cracks and crevices were observed in this structure. Fatal contradictions appeared which seemed to endanger the whole building. Mathematicians were divided into two camps. Those who regarded the theory of the Infinite as a " disease from which mathematics had to recover " (Henri Poincarè), and those who said with Hilbert : " No one shall expel us from the Paradise which Cantor has created for us."

The latter view led to the attempt of the *formalist* school of Hilbert in Germany, and of the *logistic* school of A. N. Whitehead and Bertrand Russell in England, to build mathematics on a " solid foundation." The most monumental achievement of this period was the tremendous " Principia Mathematica " of Whitehead and Russell, which appeared just before the World Crash of 1914.

In a sense, this work was the last great attempt to build classical mathematics on a completely firm and unassailable basis. For it must be realised that it was not only the newly-discovered Infinite Realms of Cantor that were at stake, the contradictions now revealed struck at the root of the whole of Classical Analysis, that is, of precisely that branch of mathematics which had been so essential in the development of Physical Science.

After the war attempts were made to " patch up " the *Principia Mathematica*, and to develop further the formalist basis of mathematics. But such " reformism " was doomed to failure. And soon we had the revolutionary challenge

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of the "Intuitionists," Brouger and Weyl, demolishing whole stories of the mathematical building, and discarding venerable modes of reasoning. Finally they went to the root of the whole matter by assailing the *fundamental principle* of formal logic—the famous "law of the excluded middle"—perhaps best described as the rule of "either—or."

But what is this but the spirit of dialectics breaking through the hard shell of formal logic, within which so much scientific thought has been imprisoned in the past! In the midst of much that is still under in detail, a Marxist cannot help feeling that here vast realms of thought await a dialectical understanding. But such things cannot be proved by dogmatic assertion. The only "proof" that will satisfy, the "proof" that is so badly needed by mathematics to-day, is the carrying through of the *work* of clearing up its foundations. To do this would be a tremendous achievement for the dialectical materialist approach to science.

DAVID GUEST.

THE WAR ON TRUTH.

The Spirit and Structure of German Fascism. By Robert A. Brady. (Gollancz.) 12s. 6d. net. (Left Book Club members at 2s. 6d.)

BECAUSE this good book is very restrained and simple, it would be easy to under-estimate its value.

Professor Brady does not try to show the horrors of fascism, to describe the machinery of individual terror or of class-torture which is the mechanical and external aspect of fascism.

All the horrors inside the concentration camps and all the thwarting of individual lives and of social progress outside the concentration camps follow as inevitably from a deliberate perversion of philosophy and science as disease in the human body follows an injection of the active virulent micro-organisms of disease.

And, roughly speaking, what Professor Brady has set out to remind us in this book is that a hypodermic injection of virulent micro-organisms able to induce disease and death can be administered as skillfully, as painlessly and as sauvely as any injection of the most beneficent cultures.

Thus, Professor Brady does not describe in any detail or otherwise than by implication the now more or less familiar horrors of the succeeding stages of decay induced by the injection of an active poison into the system of society; but he does, throughout his whole book, examine how the poisonous culture is being produced in the laboratories of the "scientists" and in the studies of the "philosophers," where only a few years ago, the antidotes to these very poisons were being prepared.

This book, in other words, is a detailed but enthralling account of how "science" can be perverted into necromancy, how "truth" can be perverted into sophistry and how "philosophy" can be perverted into a kind of anæsthetic, so subtly that the process can pass unnoticed until it is too late, until another dark age of history has been ushered in.

The dark ages of history are dark in precisely the measure in which sophistry supplants existing truth. That is what we mean by dark, dark in that the clouds of ruling-class-inspired-truth have obscured the light of scientific enquiry which would otherwise have been available then and there.

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What we do NOT mean by dark ages is ages which did not enjoy the "advantages" of the particular knowledge which we have since acquired.

Knowledge is not an "advantage" in an absolute sense, any more than a given hundred yards of railway track is an advantage in any absolute or isolated way; and what we imply by darkness is darkness relative, not to *our* time, but to conditions which had existed already and might have continued to exist in the period under examination.

This is what Professor Brady's book brings out so clearly, that the new dark age of German history is not dark because the citizens of the third Reich do not know as much about genetics as Soviet citizens will know in another century, but because German citizens to-day are not allowed to know as much about genetics as they themselves did know four years ago and as we still know to-day.

Now in order *not to know to-day* something which we did know yesterday, it is necessary that our minds shall have been filled in the interval with a lie to take the place of the truth we knew before, since clearly we cannot simply empty a mind and leave a vacuum.

Professor Brady's book is an examination of this lie and of the vast and immensely organised machinery for manufacturing and for distributing this lie with which the minds of the citizens in fascist countries are being filled, the lie of race-hatred, the "science" of "blood and soil," the "sublime heroism" of the "warrior," the "fate-decreed subjection" of the "woman like the cow."

The structural plan of the book is simple and effective like a clear graph:

PART I.	PART II.
The co-ordination of spirit by means of "science," "art," "labour-training," the schooling of youth, and the schooling of women.	The co-ordination of structure by means of Agricultural settlements, system of land tenure, system of internal and external economics and trade and by the privileged position of big business.

SUMMARY.

The looming shadow of fascism over the world.

It is that summary, that last chapter, which is perhaps the most important of all, for it is in this chapter that Professor Brady shows how the injection of this lie, this necromancy, this sophistry, can be effected by modern technique almost unnoticed and will be effected, not only in Germany or in Czechoslovakia, but in all Europe and in America unless those who care for the life of the mind, equipping themselves with a genuinely scientific analysis of world history, join the working-class in the one struggle which can defeat Fascism—the struggle against capitalism itself.

EDWARD CHARLES.

A NEWSPAPER-MAN IN ITALY.

The Triumph of Barabbas. By Giovanni Giglio. (Gollancz.) 10s. 6d.

GIOVANNI GIGLIO was correspondent of the *Daily Herald* in Rome from 1919 till 1924, when he was expelled by the Fascist Government, then in the first flush of its power. From 1924 to 1930 Giglio furnished Italian news for the *Herald* from the safer side of the frontier at Chiasso, Lugano and Nice, but even here he was subject to the constant attentions of the police and the local Fascist organisations.

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The value of Giglio's book lies in the sidelights he is able to throw from personal experience on conditions of life under Fascism. He tells indeed, in a rather scrappy manner, the story of the " March " on Rome, which its leader carried out in a railway sleeping car and its rank and file by skulking in hiding places until the king refused to impose martial law and the troops were withdrawn. He reminds his readers that the triumph of Fascism in Italy was based on the disunity and indecisiveness of the Socialist leaders ; that a powerful contributing factor was the emergence of the Catholic Popular Party which drew away the peasants from Socialist influence ; and that Fascism is not based on petty bourgeois interests, but of those of great financiers, industrialists, and landowners.

But although these things emerge from a careful reading of the book, it does not purport to be a systematic study of political development in Italy. It is a loose collection of personal anecdotes, not always very pointed or relevant to the main theme of the book, valuable rather as source book for future writers who will derive significant data from one who saw the rise of Fascism from inside Italy and who had special opportunities and qualifications for judging.

L. W.

An Error Corrected

Last month there appeared an incorrect statement of the Guarantee Fund. Items received on existing guarantees were added as new ones and thus twice included in the total given. This month we correct that.

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Previously Acknowledged	127	17	5
Julius First, South Africa	0	5	0
Alan Morton, London	1	0	0
John Taylor, Mexboro'	0	1	0
Nelson, Cambridge	0	6	0
Hastings, Surrey	0	2	0
F.W.B., Proceeds from sales	0	6	9
Anon., New Zealand	0	12	0
H. P. Vowles, Gloster	1	0	0
	£131	10	2

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